TEACHING THE COUNTRY TO SPEAK
Settling and Establishing Place in the Central North Thompson

by

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it is clear that the indigenous peoples shaped and affected the nature of interaction, it is also evident that geography and locally-available resources went a long way toward determining the impact of European expansion on the Tsimshian and Nisga'a.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at the Euro-American approach to the Central North Thompson valley, a region in the southern interior of British Columbia. An analysis of land surveys and landscape names sheds light on the conceptual framework with which Western culture disclosed place. On another, but philosophically related level, the chosen historiographical approach is critical of the implicit belief in progress which often underlies the historical narratives. The chronological approach of the thesis points to the fragmentary nature of various episodes, such as the rupture in native culture or the miners' brief search for wealth, rather than emphasising the continuity and seamless progress of History in the Central North Thompson.

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To Carola,

sine qua non.

PREFACE

My parents' house is situated on a plateau which overlooks a small lake. Visitors would drive up to the house, get out of their car and look over the little lake enclosed by mountain sides and trees. Often, the first question would be "...are there any fish in it?" The regularity with which this question was asked began to puzzle me because it appeared to reveal a fundamentally different perspective than my own. The question seemed so one-dimensional in its utilitarian consideration, so disconnected from the place and its peaceful, remote setting that I found it difficult to bridge the difference. 'Place' to the questioner was of instrumental concern: without fish it was useless; it had failed to live up to its potential which was to be a vessel for edible, catchable fish. Since the answer to the question was "No", the visitor often revealed himself an engineer and verbally sketched the appropriate systems which would support the fish.

Gradually, I saw more of this approach: during logging and tree-planting, I found that the forest was there for one purpose alone: to produce merchantable timber at the lowest possible cost. As a Park Ranger in Wells Gray Park essential responsibilities revolved around devising ways to attract the most tourists possible to the park as to

validate its existence. These perspectives seemed to reveal a remarkably one-dimensional understanding of place, banishing any aesthetic considerations to the realm of the etc. However, rather than judging these differing viewpoints, I became curious about what they might reveal about human approach to place. I have pursued this interest through a historical approach to the North Thompson valley.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION – SPACE WITH A HISTORY

Beginning in 1872, the small 12 ton sternwheeler Kamloops began regular service on the North Thompson as she supplied the Canadian Pacific Railway Survey depot in Clearwater.[1] As a symbol and a tangible machine, the sternwheeler suggests a provoking metaphor of the American miners and the technology they brought to British Columbia's waterways. American companies, eager to take advantage of the trading possibilities of the Western American river systems with their large influx of gold-miners, had developed a remarkable shallow-draft vessel.[2] Its wide, flat hull enabled it "to sail *on* the water instead of *in* it."[3] The

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[1] George M. Dawson, the well known Canadian geographer and geologist used this boat when he went up to Clearwater in 1875. August Menanteau was captain on this and other sternwheelers on the river. Often, sternwheeler captains acted as valuable guides on the same rivers, capitalising on their valuable local knowledge. He was captain on the Marten when she made a trip up to modern-day Vavenby in 1875. Mary Balf, Kamloops: A History of the District to 1914, 3d ed., (Kamloops, B.C.: Kamloops Museum Association, 1989), 22.

[2] Even though the steam engine was developed in Britain the Americans adapted it successfully to the pioneer conditions of the continent's west. The Hudson's Bay Company's side-wheeler Beaver was the only British-designed and built steamer on the British Columbia coast in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It could not negotiate the province's shallow, continuously changing rivers, since it drew almost ten feet of water and was designated to sail in ocean water.

[3] Louis C. Hunter, Steamboats on the Western Rivers: an Economic and Technological History (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 76. These ships often had a draught of less than twelve inches fully loaded. The many newspaper reports of the time about launching of new steamers would always rank the new vessel in this category.

construction of the hull was relatively simple and required neither special skills nor regular shipyards and could use locally available and milled wood. Their engines, however, which frequently outlasted their hulls and could power a succession of other vessels, were often built in the foundries of the American East.[4] Therefore, these vessels represented multinational technology. The sternwheeler's voracious appetite for firewood necessitated regular fuel-stops providing a winter income for settlers along the river. Several such sternwheelers were built in Kamloops.

Despite their valuable service, sternwheelers were subject to frequent breakdowns and the wilderness rivers in which they were used constantly changed their course and became impassable; logjams would make travel hazardous, time-consuming and costly. William Showers, who in the summer of 1876 participated in the CPR survey along the North Thompson, described a typical incident involving the little sternwheeler Kamloops:

> Sun. July 23. ...Steamer started to run down to Raft River and broke her wheel, all hands at work repairing...
> Mon. July 24. Got up at 4 o'clock. Helped to work on repairing the Boat. Finished the part set aside for me at 3 o'clock, the rest finished at 8. ...
> Tues. July 25. Finished repairing the boat and started at 11 o'clock. Got to Raft River Cash at 12. Stopped there until one. Broke one bucket, and one

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[4] One local example was the Distributor built in Kamloops in 1912 to service the building of the Canadian Northern Railway, using the engine of an earlier Distributor which had done yeoman service during construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. After two years she was dismantled and her engine powered yet another Distributor on the Peace and Mackenzie rivers. See Mary Balf, Ship Ahoy! Paddle Wheelers of the Thompson Waterway (Kamloops, B.C.: Kamloops Museum Association, 1973), 10-11.

> set of arms out, stoped at the Reservation [Chu Chua] to repair. Stopped at Saw Mill all night.[5]

The steamer had broken down just ten days previously. Showers did not complain about the breakdown but accepted the two-day delay with equanimity, which is all the more astonishing since he was on his way home to Portland, Oregon, and civilisation and he did not hesitate to comment on other hardships of his employment such as mosquitoes.[6] Clearly, Showers was glad to get to the steamer: carrying heavy packs he had walked twenty-five miles in less than a day on difficult packtrails along the North Thompson in order to reach the Kamloops, an astonishing feat. The sternwheeler represented civilisation for Showers regardless of its frequent breakdowns. The steamer's symbolic nature was important, since it resolved a paradox: why use a machine that was expensive to build and operate and subject to frequent breakdowns?

Sternwheelers were visible and audible signs of progress. The steamer on the water, its whistle echoing up the valley announced the steamer's coming on the rails. It embodied the intention of progress, where the literal and figurative sense of the word collapsed into one. The whistle of the steamer or the train was highly emotionally charged for the settlers. The familiar fanfare overwhelmed the daunting otherness of the jungle, drawing scattered settlers together in a united auditory experience like churchbells once did. It moved many to poetry and some

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[5] William Showers, "William Showers' Journal, 1876" (British Columbia Archives and Record Service (BCARS), ECSH 9.1), 6.

[6] "June 28. ...Musquetoes very bad... ." He complains about them on other occasions: "July 14. ...[clearing] is a fearful job... ." (Ibid., 4, 6.)

to music.[7] In this sense, audible space became settled parallel to physical space. The steamer, as symbol of progress and civilisation, tied all those within earshot into the Empire and its reassuring civilisation.

Great optimism prevailed in the British Empire in the mid-nineteenth century; in the words of

> the most popular writer of the age, T.B. Macaulay, [the English had become] the greatest and most highly civilised people that ever the world saw, have spread their dominion over every quarter of the globe ... have created the science of healing, the means of locomotion and correspondence, every mechanical art, every manufacture, every thing that promotes the convenience of life, to a perfection which our ancestors would have thought magical.[8]

The new machines were not only a source of awe and pride: "it was a Victorian commonplace that 'every improvement of the means of locomotion benefits mankind morally and intellectually as well as materially'"[9] Here, the progress, the wheezing and puffing of the sternwheeler "round the bend" clearly acquired moral overtones. Not only did the steamer's whistle announce victory over nature by the enlightened harnessing of its powers: moral and intellectual progress seemed assured by the improvement of everyone's physical conditions,

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[7] An example of local poetry is "Mount St. Paul" by Tom Kearney in Balf, Kamloops to 1914, p. i. For an example of music, consider the famous Blue Grass tune "The Orange Blossom Special".

[8] Walter E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870 (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1957), 39. Earlier in the nineteenth century, the poet Thomas Carlyle praised "the power of the machine and of the men who dared frame its fearful symmetry," and spoke of "'the brute Primeval Powers' which the Watts, Arkwrights, and Brindleys have tamed and harnessed in the steam engine" and pronounced that "we are Giants in physical power." (Ibid., 198-199.)

[9] Ibid., 11.

the comforts of which would foster a contented synchronous labouring together of all classes of humanity like a well-tuned steam-engine: all would work together for a greater common good.

Incomprehensible to Victorians were those who would stand at the periphery or worse — outside of — this wonderful realm illuminated by the bright torch of progress. This sentiment is mirrored in George M. Dawson's diary as he records a scene on the North Thompson River on his way back from a successful exploration of the area around Clearwater aboard the little steamer Kamloops:

> saw an old indian sitting at his fire cooking something in a pot, with two or three half dried fish on a pole near him & a dog. He sat in a crouched attitude with his back to the river, intently stirring his pot, & though we passed almost within a Stones [sic] throw of him, he never turned, nor indicated in anyway that he noticed the steamer at all![10]

The exclamation mark was one of astonishment: how could anyone turn his back on this visible sign of progress? The denial of the obvious was puzzling but it revealed a deep cultural chasm. The noisy clutter of the engine, of a vessel floating on top rather than immersed in its element might make it part of a fleeting, parallel universe where dynamic movement had become an end in itself.

As an optimistic statement, the machine reveals certain aspects about the culture which operated it: a culture of great mobility and a firm belief in progress. The miners were extraordinarily mobile: many originally came from the United States and oscillated between their busy summer work in the mountains of British Columbia and their more

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[10] Douglas Cole and Bradley Lockner, eds., The Journals of George M. Dawson: British Columbia, 1875-1878, vol. II, (Vancouver:

relaxed winter-quarters back home in the United States. Their culture was rooted in the dynamic pursuit of a gold-bearing creek or vein, but not rooted in any physical sense. The only traces of their searching progress were so many holes in the ground that today those are often — and paradoxically — confused with the archaeological sites of Native pit-houses.

The sternwheeler might mirror white culture further in that it was barely immersed in a "native" medium: it floated on the water rather than in it. Later arrivals had a similar relationship with the land: conceptually, the surveyors and miners were not interested in the land as such but in its possibilities. The land was an instrument to their dreams, their progress. The surveyors' grid and their maps were devices or machines which suggested themselves between the viewer and its object. The surveyors came to the area to lay a grid on the ground, construct a few trails if they had to, create portable knowledge in the form of maps and accompanying notes — and then quickly to return to the civilisation whence they came and whose outstretched hands they represented. It was left to the settlers to establish a permanent white presence, to "settle" the area's unrest.

Curiously, even the settlers embodied the paradox of mobility. What made them settlers in just that sense was that, after having covered often dramatic distances, they settled down in homesteads.[11]

University of British Columbia Press, 1989), 308. (May 24, 1877)

[11] In a different geographical context, Paul Voisey has demonstrated the astonishing mobility of the prairie settler. Paul Voisey, Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 33.

However, most often they un-settled themselves from their original domicile and sold it so that they might advance and purchase a more promising section. The Home Trail Volumes, chronicling the history of many North Thompson settler families, are filled with the tales of pioneers moving about in search for a better prospect, not unlike the miners and trappers who had come before them. In this sense, settlement and progress, terms which are often hitched together form an uneasy alliance. The people who thought of themselves and liked to be called "settlers" presented with that term the inverse of their culture's character: a dynamically mobile people more defined by the road than the temporary plot of land they might call homestead. Therefore, probing the settlement culture in their appreciation of place will yield important insights into its nature.

In the process of creating a home, the newcomers "taught the country to speak" by naming many features of the landscape. The surveying process which preceded them erased the previous Native presence and created a white map — both in the sense that it was deceptively empty or blank and in that it reflected only white points of view.

People and Geography of the Central North Thompson

The geographical focus of this study is British Columbia's North Thompson valley north of the village of Barriere (see Figure 1). The climate is moderate with warm summers and temperate winters. Precipitation increases noticeably towards the north of the valley. The

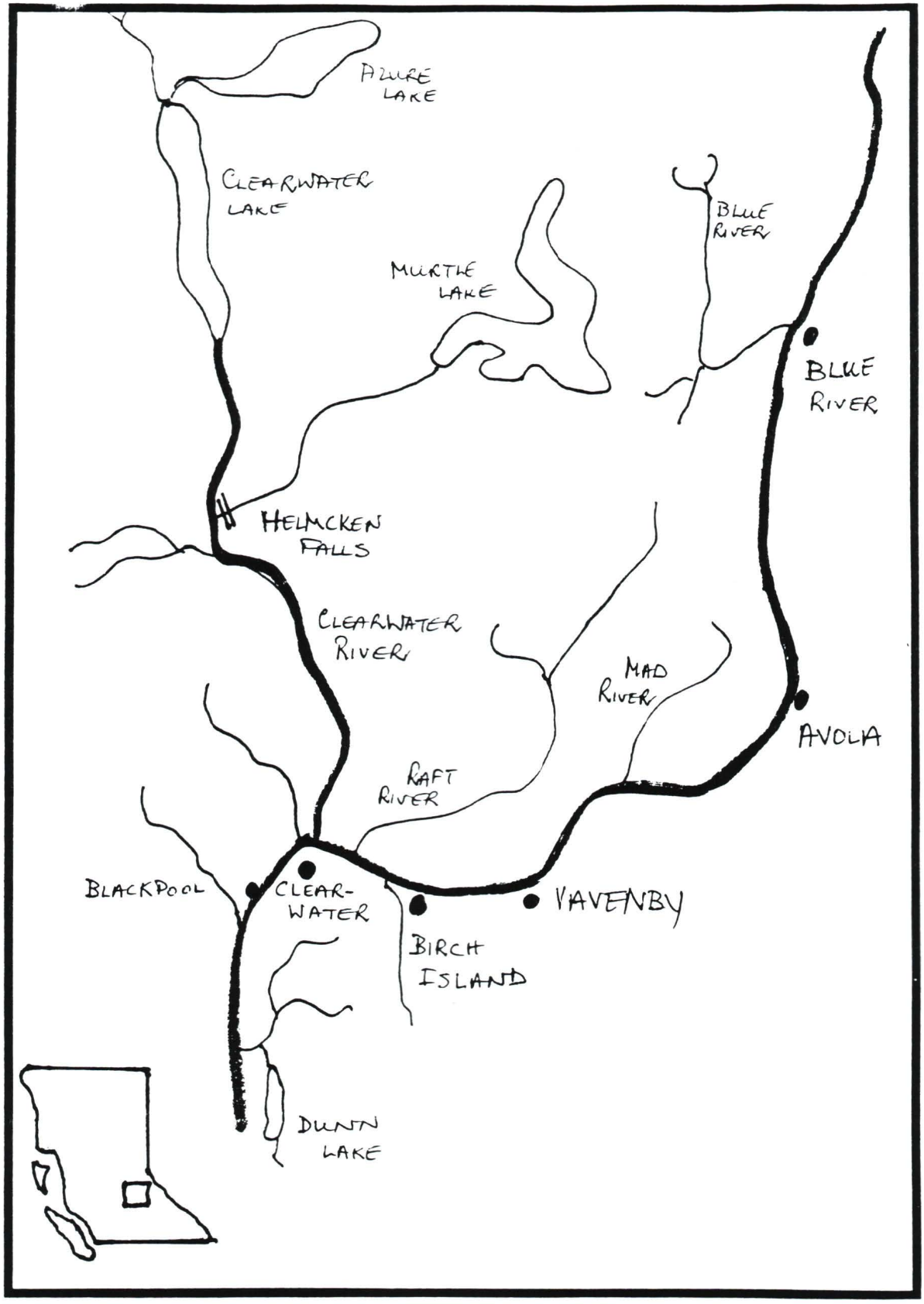

Figure 1. Map of the Central North Thompson.

transition zone between the Interior Dry Belt and the Interior Wet Belt occurs near Clearwater with summer irrigation being required south of there. Similarly, snowfall and snow accumulation increase dramatically to the north of the Clearwater-Vavenby area. The climate is favourable for agriculture in the North Thompson valley itself. Some ranching and small scale farming occur in the side valleys such as the Upper Clearwater Valley towards Wells Gray Park and the Dunn Lake valley east of the North Thompson and running parallel to it.

White settlement in the area began in earnest with speculation surrounding Premier Richard McBride's announcement in 1909 that the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway would commence construction of a third transcontinental link taking the route of the North Thompson valley.[12] Before that, the Hudson's Bay Company had been active in the area from 1812 to the early 1860s after which most of the commercial activity switched from fur trading to gold mining. By the early 1920s the area's economy was based mainly on mixed farming with some income generated from mining and small-scale logging contracts.

In 1926, an intensive fire devastated a large part of the Upper Clearwater valley, including several homesteads. The resulting young vegetation supported an explosive increase in the game population, particularly moose which was on a southward migration through the Interior Plateau at the same time. This, as Forester Noble noted in 1939 when he recommended that the area be set aside as a game reserve, made the area into a sportsman's paradise. The subsequent creation of

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[12] Today this is part of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) system.

Wells Gray Park, named after the Minister of Lands, became British Columbia's third largest provincial park and benefited Clearwater economically through tourism and guiding businesses.

Beginning in 1941, the area's economy became heavily dominated by the logging industry which took advantage of the rich virgin stands of interior Douglas Fir to the south and the large Red Cedar and Western Hemlock stands to the north of Clearwater. By the mid 1980s these stands had become sufficiently depleted to force closure of the mills in Clearwater. Today, the valley's economy is sustained by a mixture of forestry, mixed agriculture and, increasingly, by tourism.

The First Nations people of this area are the Simpcw, the North Thompson branch of the Shuswap people who belong to the large language family of the Interior Salish. They are concentrated mainly around the little village of Chu Chua, the Indian Reserve north of Barriere. The contact between the First Nations people and the surrounding Euro-Canadian population is friendly but limited. The Shuswap Nation under the leadership of Chief Nathan Mathews of the Simcw is presently preparing for extensive land claim negotiations with both the federal and provincial government. During the early 1990s, the Simcw, in alliance with the small Clearwater-based Yellowhead Ecological Association (YEA), were instrumental in resisting a proposed water diversion project that would have pumped water from the Upper North Thompson into the Columbia River system, whence it would have been channelled to California. Resolute Native leadership and effective lobbying temporarily halted this project which, for economic reasons, had enjoyed considerable support from the white population.

Theoretical Approach

This paper investigates rural place and region and takes the viewpoints of spatial history into account. It is not argued that chronology is unimportant but that it has been somewhat overemphasised to the detriment of spatial conceptions of place. This is particularly true when chronology is mated to the narrative of progress. Spatial history can help interpret how individuals and communities have related to the space around them and when seeking to explain why they reacted in certain ways.

The historian Ruth Sandwell has pointed out that "historians, anthropologists, and sociologists have been informed by an 'unconscious temporal map' that imposes on the past a 'directional and cultural progression from traditional to modern" and she laments that rural historians feel particularly limited by the straight-jacket of "this evolutionary perspective because it superimposes a framework of analysis that allows neither the conceptual room nor the incentive to explore the details of rural societies".[13] Traditional history often has approached that facet of rural place which discloses the one-directional narrative of progress.

The grand narrative of progress is seductive: in the context of the North Thompson the observer's attention focuses on Natives because they supplied furs to the Hudson's Bay Company, later the Hudson's Bay traders supplied the miners, then the miners explored the area to re-

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[13] Ruth W. Sandwell, "Rural Reconstruction: Towards a New Synthesis in Canadian History," Social History/Histoire Sociale 27, no. 53, (May 1994): 6.

emerge as trappers who gradually began to settle down in makeshift cabins, and in time, attracted settler families who built more permanent dwellings. In other words, the narrow paths of the Natives almost organically grew wider and more numerous as more people ascended the North Thompson valley. As long as there was movement there must have been a goal.

But it seems that this perspective overlooks — or at least minimises — the many elements of discontinuity. In this case, the chronological thread of the thesis rather emphasises the fragment of Native history, the brief, discontinuous adventure of the miners and the surveyor's short dance across the land. And did the settlers come to end this impermanence? The surveyor's grid had, implicitly perhaps, attempted to arrest the population movement, but many settlers usurped it to "trade places", to better their prospects elsewhere. What seems on the surface to be a guarantor of stability — the familiar grid — revealed itself to be a source of dynamism.

Because the grid rationally quantified land into more or less equal 160 acre chunks, it could be bought and sold on that basis. The re-sale value of a piece of property was upper-most on the owner's mind which injected the very act of settling down with a dynamic of its own since there would be a move as soon as a better prospect came along. Settlers felt that they could not lose by "filing on a homestead." It cost very little, the improvements could be reclaimed through sale and, through lucky circumstances, a profit might be made.

Although it is important to recognise these fragments of history as valid on their own, it does not mean that they are not interconnected,

sometimes even causally, but that to see them only from the perspective of the linearity of chronology, where the observer's spotlight conveniently shifts as the narrative script of progress dictates, may do the individuals and their contemporaries a disservice: it swallows up and levels their genuine differences and individual characteristics in the interests of explaining how progress got to where we are now. In that sense, the surveyors and the settlers are discussed on their own so that the historical moment of their approach to the land will not be spirited away.

For several reasons it was also important to present the Native Chapter on its own. First, it mirrors reality. Historically, white culture has approached its Native counterpart with reservation. Even today, relations between the Simpcw and the white population of the valley are friendly but distant. Secondly, it is problematic to attempt to integrate Native and white history by merging their chronology from the viewpoint of modern-day British Columbia. This concern has been summarised from a Canadian national perspective but it holds just as true provincially:

> putting first nations on maps that chart a story of national development map well be inclusionary, but it may also be incorporative, co-optive, and controlling. Put another way, it may historically nationalize people who now, seeking de-colonization, refuse this very nationalizing principle.[14]

In this approach the Simpcw would not be

> merely 'mapped out' of their own territory, but 'mapped into' the concocted antiquity upon which our own territoriality and nationhood had always depended. Such is the power of modern cartography that it can turn Indian Nations into

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[14] Matthew Sparke, "Between Demythologizing and Deconstructing the Map: Shawnadithit's New-found-land and the Alienation of Canada," Cartographica 32, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 13.

museums and historical chance into national destiny.[15]

This task is facilitated because the disaster of introduced diseases created a rupture and discontinuity in Native culture which occurs conveniently at the arrival of continuous white settlement. This makes it tempting to graft the beginning of white settlement onto the declining end of the Native presence because it fits *chronologically*. If we can accept *this* connection, it is easy and seductive to postulate a British Columbia history going back 12,000 years, since the convenience of a seamless chronology hides the fundamental differences between Native and white history. However, there is no written Native history of the area from a Simpcw perspective to take the place of a conventional approach.[16]

But the "Native chapter" is not meant to be a Native history, whether from a white or Native point of view. It seeks to bring an appreciation of the Native experience to the discussion of the settlement process which is often silent about the Native presence. This process embodied erasure of any previous Native conceptions of the area, unless specifically sanctioned in the authorisation of a certain toponym. Erasure was central to proclaiming the beginnings so boldly celebrated in settler histories. It is important to understand that the settler and government-proclaimed vacancy of the land was rhetorical: whites knew

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[15] Ken G. Brealey, "Mapping Them 'Out': Euro-Canadian Cartography and the Appropriation of the Nuxalk and Ts'ilhgot'in First Nations' Territories, 1793-1916," The Canadian Geographer 39, no.2 (1995): 154.

[16] In the 1970s, the chief of the Simpcw and his wife began to write a history of his band. So far, only a fragment covers events up to the 1830s. Marie Matthew and Nathan Matthew, "A Brief Description of the North Thompson Shuswap Culture and History," [incomplete

of the previous Native presence but chose to be silent about it.

Since the Simpcw are gathering evidence for an upcoming land claims tribunal, they thought it ill-advised to share information, both anecdotal and factual, which might influence their position in the negotiations. [17] This problem was keenly felt when I attempted to obtain Native place-names to construct a map of the area which might have approached Native understanding of place; I found only a limited number of such names.[18]

There are other more general concerns: it has been argued that "as 'history' is an intellectual tool forged by Europeans, it cannot be used to fashion a true understanding of the past as experienced by Native peoples."[19] However, the chapter serves an important purpose in that it acknowledges the Native presence in the area. Without it, the rupture in Simpcw culture, which was so intimately connected with every phase of white settlement, would be glossed over. In that case, the Native chapter is part of the story of white settlement, and therefore part of this thesis. But it stands alone for the reasons mentioned above.

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manuscript], (Chu Chua: 1978).

[17] Band members were at all times courteous and, as far as they could be under the circumstances, helpful. I particularly would like to thank Eddie Celesta, band manager, for his time and co-operation.

[18] The Band gave me a short list of such names. Other names are found in: George M. Dawson, "Notes on the Shuswap People of British Columbia," Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada for the Year 1891 IX (Montreal: 1892): 40-44, and James A. Teit, "The Shuswap," in The Jesup North Pacific Expedition, ed. Franz Boas (Leiden: E.J. Bill Ltd., 1908), 451-452.

[19] Mary C. Koyl, "Cultural Chasm: A 1960s Hydro Development and the Tsay Keh Dene Native Community of Northern British Columbia", (University of Victoria: M.A. Thesis, 1992), 8.

As already indicated, an analysis of place names and survey reports is useful because they document how white culture groped to transform space into a place — since

> space in a philosophical sense is empty. It requires bounding and identification by an individual, an interaction between self and environment to be recognized[20]

What holds true for this relationship between individual and environment also holds true for a group of individuals attempting to transform the Central North Thompson area into a place, a home. Linguistically, the record of such a new society, a group of dis-homed people seeking to transform a space into a place is documented in the many place-names. Some were officially sanctioned, others not. As described in Chapter V, the various avenues of getting a place name sanctioned involved government institutions such as railways and the Post Office. In addition, some landscape features enjoyed competing toponyms, between Native and Euro-Canadian groups and between the different, chronological layers of immigrants.

While questioning the dominating role of chronology in the historical perspective, conceptions of place in regional studies must also be examined. In the past historians have often regarded regional studies as pieces of a puzzle which neatly fit together to yield a contiguous whole. The sociologist Bernard S. Cohn, for example, has criticised what he perceived to be local history's positivist intentions:

> History from the bottom up sends the historian to smaller and smaller localities so that he or she may observe the lives

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[20] Susan-Ann Lee, "The Value of the Local Area," in Valued Environments, eds. John R. Gold and Jacquelin Burgess (London: George and Unwin, 1982), 161.

> of people in the round. The assumption behind the smallness of scale (temporal and/or spatial) of the research of contemporary historians is positivistic: that when we have studied the workers in enough industrializing English cities, we will have the building blocks for a new and scientific history. This is like the efforts of American colonial historians, with the expectation that if there were enough monographs on specific political constitutions, we could then write the true history of American democracy.[21]

Just as there are authentic, valid fragments in what seems to be the seamless narrative of progress, there are valid spatial pieces, worthy of attention. A regional history of the North Thompson must not necessarily form a constituent part of a contiguous assembly of other, similar regional studies. The historian Daniel Clayton, for example, has questioned "the power of discourses to produce "truths" that stretch beyond their points of production [and become more widely accepted] by illustrating the diverse connections between knowledge, power and space in the Skeena region."[22] This does not deny that important insights can be gathered from other local studies.

In considering this theoretical approach, the thesis will explore the extent to which the people of the Central North Thompson area took possession of the region as a "place". To research this question, the study will analyse the area's settlement process and its influence on establishing a sense of place. The conclusion will then place the debate into a broader theoretical context.

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[21] Bernard S. Cohn, "History and Anthropology: The State of Play," Comparative Studies in Society and History 22 (1980): 216. Cohn has amended his already polemic formula of "history from the bottom up" with the term "proctological history." (Ibid., 214.)

[22] Daniel Clayton, "Geographies of the Lower Skeena," BC Studies, no. 94 (Summer 1992): 57.

A Note On Sources

Little has been written about the Central North Thompson valley. Between 1980 and 1985, V. Lois Moss, a former teacher of the area recorded and published the memories of many of the valley's early settlers as the Home Trail volumes. Although these are valuable, they are memories and as such selective and often coloured by a strong belief in the inevitability of progress. The pioneers see themselves as just that: a beginning which culminated in today's reality. Therefore, events were selected to fit this story.

Beginning in 1911 and coinciding with white settlement, the area was surveyed. The accounts of these men were coloured by a strong belief in progress, as was customary for the time: their visions of the area's agricultural potential were far too optimistic. However, their accounts have proven very useful in that they show contemporary government beliefs about and approach to the area's settlement. The surveyors also constructed maps which were important in the analysis of the white approach to place. These maps generally offered an optimistic portrait of the existing state of knowledge: although they claimed completeness by virtue of their contiguous lines across the page, these lines often bore little resemblance to the realities on the ground.

Newspaper accounts were another important source. They were strongly coloured by boosterish editorial comments, whether these were repeated promises of a mining paradise in the 1860s or grand visions of an impending real estate boom during the early years of the twentieth century. For example, John Freemont Smith, who operated a land-locating agency for the North Thompson valley, was the major source of

information about the valley for the Kamloops Inland Sentinel, tirelessly proclaiming the area's wonderful possibilities to the agriculturalist, miner, lumberman, orchardist and investor.[23] His motives were not entirely altruistic.

Other government records were consulted, including the annual reports of the Indian agent, mining reports, geological surveys, and archaeological reports. Some people kindly shared their unpublished manuscripts, such as Frank Shook, former park ranger in Wells Gray Park on the valley's early history and Muriel Dunford who had recorded aspects of the valley's early mining history. Several people also agreed to taped interviews.

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[23] John F. Smith, "Where Fortune Smiles: Free Lands for Intending Settlers. The North Thompson River Valley – A Virgin Country for the Farmer, Rancher, Lumberman and Prospector," Inland Sentinel, 2 July 1904.

CHAPTER II

"THE PEOPLE UP THERE"[1]

The Interior uplands of British Columbia are very old. Deglaciation began about 12,000 — 13,000 years ago with valleys becoming ice-free and suitable for human occupation around 2,000 years later.[2] One of the earliest human remains in the interior has been found 40 km west of Kamloops at Gore Creek.[3] Laboratory tests found the bone fragments to be about 8,500 years old.[4] Although the limited population density of the North Thompson has not led to the construction activity which often generates systematic archaeological surveys, the accidental discovery of a skeleton at Gore Creek about 100 km away suggests there was human habitation in the area from 8,000 to 8,500 years ago.

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[1] The North Thompson band is referred to by their own name, Simpcw, which translates into "the people up there" according to Eddie Celesta, band manager. (Eddie Celesta, interview by author, 28 January 1993, Chu Chua.) James A. Teit translated their name to "people of the upper reaches or top". (Teit, "The Shuswap," 454.)

[2] Knut R. Fladmark, "An Introduction to the Prehistory of British Columbia," Canadian Journal of Archaeology, no. 6 (1982): 99. Compare also S. Cybulski et al., "An Early Human Skeleton from South Central British-Columbia: Dating and Bioarchaeological Inference," Canadian Journal of Archaeology, no. 5, (1981): 52.

[3] This site has been designated EeQw48 and was discovered in 1975.

[4] The Carbon 14 process dates the bone fragments to 8,250 years with a possible error of 115 years. This estimate has been appended by a D13C analysis on collagen from the right humerus which yielded a date of 8,340 with a similar margin of error. Cybulski et al., "An Early Human Skeleton," 50-52.

Archaeologists have been active in the North Thompson area for some time. The Simpcw people have an obvious interest in these findings as they affect their land claims negotiations. As a result, they have commissioned archaeological studies.[5] The Native interest is understandably much more regionally focused than academic investigations which seek to construct a broader picture of British Columbia pre history (see Figure 2).[6]

Archaeologists studying the area traditionally occupied by the Interior Salish tribes, and by the Simpcw in particular, look primarily for characteristic circular cultural depressions in the ground. These moderate hollows are left by traditional Native pithouses or cooking and roasting pits. The North Thompson area has many such cultural depressions, indicating the location of historic and prehistoric winter-villages and summercamps. In 1968, for example, researchers found and began to excavate a large, permanent fishing village near Clearwater, B.C. which had been abandoned after the small pox epidemic of 1862.[7] persistent problem for archaeologists is that none of the discovered and excavated cultural depressions is older than 4,000 years.

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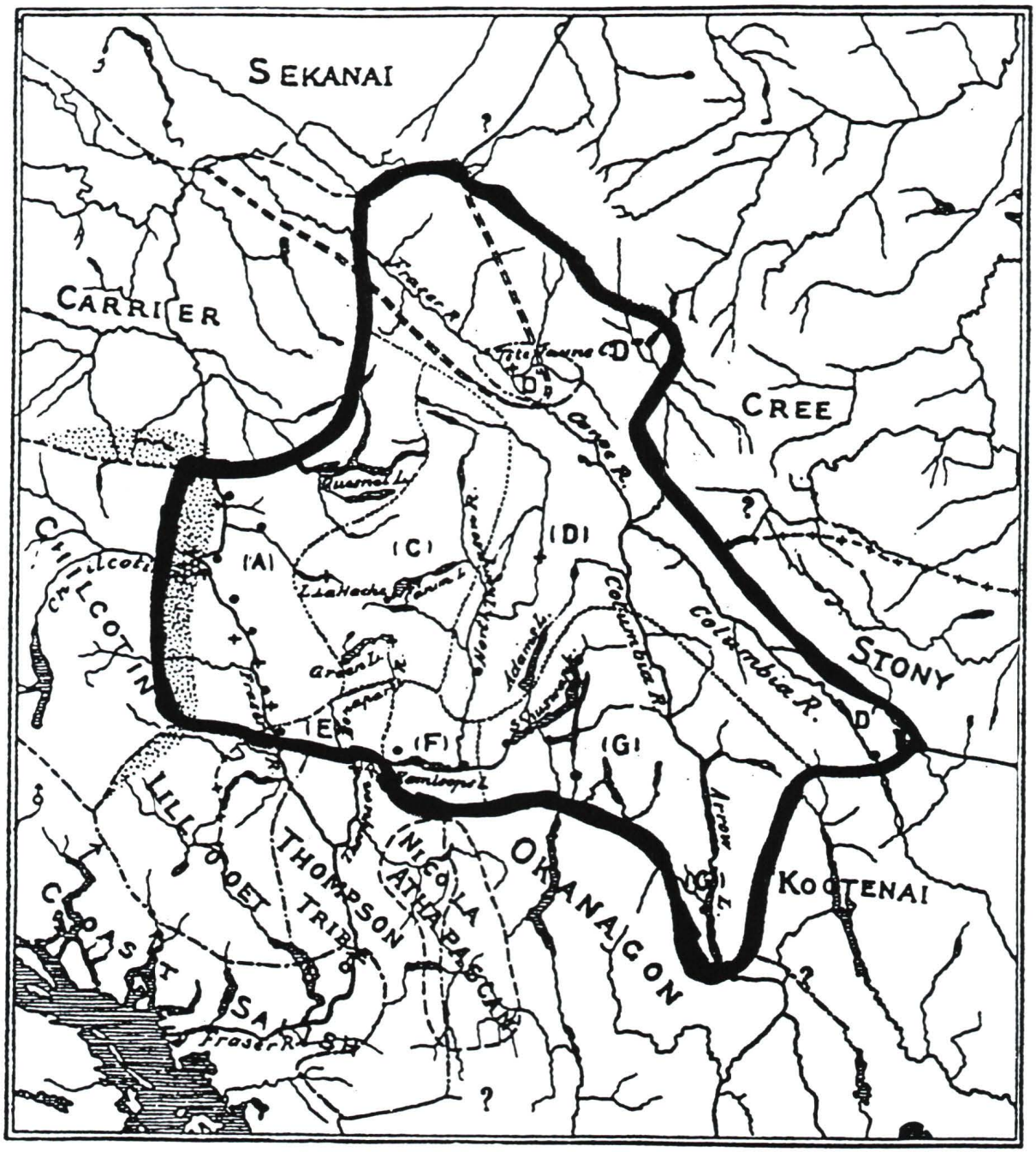
[5] See Robert Muckle, "Archaeological Resources in Wells Gray Provincial Park: An Overview, Inventory and Preliminary Impact Assessment," (Maple Ridge: unpublished manuscript, 1987), 25.

[6] Ironically, these efforts are themselves parochial in nature as they are largely delimited by the boundary of British Columbia.

[7] John L. Hull, Archaeological Excavations at Clearwater River Park August 12-29, 1968. A Preliminary Report to the Archaeological Sites Advisory Board, (Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1969). See also Sandy Schurman, "Report to Archaeological Sites Advisory Board on Site Survey done in Kamloops District," (Victoria: unpublished manuscript, 1969).



A, Fraser River Division.
B, Cañon Division, territory now largely occupied by the Chilcotin.
C, Lake Division.
D, North Thompson Division.
D′, Kinbasket.
D″, Former territory of the Iroquois Band.
D‴, Shuswap, Cree, and Iroquois mixed.
E, Bonaparte Division.
F, Kamloops Division.
G, Shuswap Lake Division.
G′, Arrow Lake Band.
●, Villages.
+, Former villages.

Dotted area, territory recently occupied by the Chilcotin. Area at head of Fraser River, enclosed by broken double lines, temporarily occupied by the Sekanai.

Figure 2. Subdivision of the Shuswap Nation. After Teit, "The Shuswap," 450.

Since the archaeological record is silent on the intervening 4,500 years, only very general inferences can be made about the Native culture of that time. The Gore Creek skeleton quickly assumed supraregional significance as it was used to generate theories about the origin, culture, and activities of early interior inhabitants.[8] Apparently, the bones belonged to a young adult male, likely between the age of 23 and 39 at the time of his death.[9] He was about 168 cm tall.[10] In comparing the measurements to average male measurements of prehistoric male skeletons from Prince Rupert Harbour, Cybulski found that the Gore Creek male was slightly taller and had longer legs than most of the Prince Rupert males. He generalised that

> the Gore Creek skeleton suggests a relatively tall and slender body build, one that is often associated with an inland hunting adaptation where the emphasis for strength and agility is placed on the lower rather than upper limbs.[11]

These differences between coastal Natives with their more marine-based hunting methods and interior hunters have been substantiated by archaeologists who have corroborated these findings by studying pre-historic Native diet and by analysing the contents of prehistoric Native cooking pits. They found that game, in addition to gathered roots and

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[8] See e.g. Cybulski et al., "An Early Human Skeleton," 54-55 who cite one example of such a construct.

[9] Ibid., 52. The authors discuss an alternative older method which puts the age between 27 and 35.

[10] Living stature was estimated at 167.96 cm using the Trotter and Gleser (1958) femur and fibula regression formula for Mongoloid males. Their formulae were chosen over others because of favourable applications to more recent (historic) Native skeletons in British Columbia when compared with actual living statures of nearly contemporaneous and related populations. (Ibid.)

berries, was an important part of prehistoric Native diet. Comparisons between the results of these investigations and the ethnographic record compiled at the end of the nineteenth century by George Mercer Dawson, the famous Canadian geologist, and the ethnographers Franz Boas and his student and collaborator James Teit, indicate substantial differences in the respective subsistence-settlement patterns.[12] Cooking pit size and re-use patterns declined from the cultural plateau of the pre-Kamloops-phase (300 B.C. to 800 A.D.). The much larger pithouse villages of that time with their more extensive cooking facilities supported larger, probably socially more complex societies than villages of historic times but were apparently not supported by an increased exploitation of marine resources such as salmon and clams "but by intensified collecting and processing of root crops in upland locations"[13]

However, knowledge of the area's prehistory is still very sketchy. The first systematic account of Simpcw culture and history is offered by ethnographers who compiled a record of what they were convinced was a dying culture. During the summer of 1903, the anthropologist James A. Teit travelled by pack train from his house in Spence's Bridge to Canim Lake and then to the North Thompson River where he spent some time among the Indians of the Red Trees Reserve [Chu Chua]. During this stay, Teit, who "spoke fluently the Thompson language and conversed

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[11] Ibid., 54.

[12] David L Pokotylo and Patricia D. Froese, "Archaeological Evidence for Prehistoric Rootgathering on the Southern Interior Plateau of British Columbia," Canadian Journal of Archaeology 7, no. 2 (1983): 152.

[13] Ibid., 152-153.

easily with the Shuswap and also with the Lillooet,"[14] collected most of his "information from George Sisiu'lax, and other old men of the North Thompson band."[15] Contemporary anthropologists such as Franz Boas praised Teit's contributions to ethnology for "his painstaking accuracy, his intimate acquaintance with the Indians, and his ability to converse with them in their own tongue" which made his descriptions of the Shuswap and neighbouring tribes "full and accurate."[16]

Modern Shuswap historians have criticised ethnologists such as Teit for presenting a rather static cultural portrait, implying that the culture had been like this, unchanged, since pre-historic days. It is clear that as comprehensive and detailed as Teit's work is, in itself it produces stasis. Teit reports the story-generating capacity of the Shuswap in historical times.[17] Documenting — and thereby fixing — the stories atrophies the reported historical capacity of oral-literature cultures to improvise, discard or renew.[18] Although Shuswap historians caution that "much of Teit's information cannot be verified as accurate," they recognise that "by referring to his work it is possible to get an approximate time of the culture as it existed one hundred years ago (and perhaps much longer) in the same area where the Band members now

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[14] Franz Boas, "Anthropological Notes: James A. Teit," American Anthropologist 24 (1922): 490. For similar information see Don Bunyan, "James Teit," The Midden XI, no. 5 (December 1979).

[15] Teit, "The Shuswap," 447.

[16] Boas, "Anthropological Notes," 490.

[17] Teit, "The Shuswap," 621.

[18] See, for example, Walter Ong, Orality and Literacy (London, England: Methuen and Co., 1982). or Eric A. Havelock, Preface to Plato

live.[19] Thus, they use myths documented by Teit particularly in curricular materials[20] which are designed to retain and promote an awareness of Shuswap culture in school age children.

Many changes had overtaken the Shuswap by the time Teit arrived in 1903. The sprawling villages near present-day Clearwater and Raft River with their satellite hunting and fishing camps had been wiped out by the smallpox epidemic of 1862 which also destroyed the continuity of customs and a rich oral history tradition. Therefore, Teit's ethnographic portrait must be read with caution; his broader assertions balanced against the brief exposure to a few band members in the summer of 1903.

Teit defined the Shuswap as a "war-like people". He described sophisticated, defensive Shuswap fortresses, two of which apparently existed along the North Thompson around 1850. Guns were not generally adopted until about 1840 although some warriors used muskets as early as 1815. However, Teit claimed that this bellicosity "only held true of the Fraser River, Bonaparte and Kamloops divisions. The others seldom engaged in war, and acted only on the defensive."[21]

(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963).

[19] Matthew and Matthew, "North Thompson Shuswap", 3.

[20] See (1) "Lecture on Shuswap Indians by Norma Kenoras," (Secwepemc Cultural Educational Society, unpublished manuscript), 1ff.
(2) "Alkali Lake Curriculum Project: History of the Shuswap," (unpublished manuscript, 1980), passim. Particularly, all the stories are "adapted from James Teit", 84-93.
(3) A similar project of stories is contained in Randy Bouchard and Dorothy I.D. Kennedy, eds., Shuswap Stories, Collected 1971-1975, (Victoria, British Columbia: British Columbia Language Project, 1977).

[21] Teit, "The Shuswap," 540. See description of these strategic forts on the previous page. The precise location of these forts remains unclear.

There is evidence, however, that when sufficiently aroused, the Simpcw were quite capable of visiting war on their foes. They fought a fellow Shuswap tribe, the Fraser River Shuswap, in the 1820s — it seems to have been the only instance of a Shuswap civil war. They also put together a war alliance with the Fraser River and Kamloops bands to carry out a swift, devastating campaign against the upper Fraser Sekani band, between approximately 1780 and 1790. After a series of provocations by the Sekani, who attempted to set up residence in the Upper North Thompson frequently harassing and killing people from the North Thompson band, a Shuswap campaign completely defeated and decimated the invaders.[22] In fact, in historical times, the Simpcw maintained a complex alliance system. They were on very friendly terms with the Canim Lake people to their west,[23] and with the Kamloops band to the south. They were also helped, on occasion, by the Cree.[24]

Overall, Teit presents a picture of a self-confident, adaptable, independent people of shrewd traders[25] who, by about 1840 had acquired

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[22] For a detailed account see Teit, "The Shuswap," 540-548. This account may be somewhat biased as Teit recorded it from a North Thompson elder.

[23] There is a fascinating account of a Chu Chua girl going over to the Canim Lake band with her aunt to take up residency there. They were surprised by the great Wells Gray Park fire of 1926 where the aunt perished. The girl secretly stayed alone in Wells Gray Park until her death in the early 1980s, annually supplied with tobacco and tea by Charles Shook, the park ranger. (Charles Shook, interview by author, 8 November 1991, Clearwater.)

[24] Teit, "The Shuswap," 542. There is also conflicting record of Cree hostility towards the Simpcw, see Ibid., 550ff.

[25] The Simpcw apparently persuaded the Hudson's Bay Company to build a trading fort at Little Fort in 1850 to facilitate the flowing fur trade on the "North River".

"plentiful" horses. The North Thompson area was deemed such a fur-rich area that from 1851-52 the Hudson's Bay Company felt compelled to operate a trading post at the mouth of Lemieux Creek, the present hamlet of Little Fort, to facilitate the trade with the Natives. Until 1859, this post was replaced by regular trips from Kamloops at "which time the Native population had declined to such a degree, mainly because of disease, that the North River fur trade virtually ceased to exist."[26]

The traumatic, devastating small-pox epidemic of 1862 changed much of this. Not only were entire villages lost — the thriving winter villages at the mouth of the Raft River and at the confluence of the Clearwater and North Thompson — but so too was their entire culture, including local knowledge of hunting and berry grounds. Although the Hudson's Bay Company post in Kamloops vaccinated Natives, the disease arrived in midsummer, the traditional food gathering season when few Natives, particularly those from as far away as the Central North Thompson, were near the post. The local clerk recorded the rapid northward progress of the disease:

> On July 12, the 'Smallpox is said to be commencing among the Indians of the North River' and by August 3 'Indians [were] dying off with the Smallpox up North River'.[27]

A few weeks later some of the Overlanders rafting on the North Thompson on their southward journey stopped at a village close to present day Clearwater and reported that "not a living soul was to be

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[26] Robert L. A. Wilson, Heritage Resource Investigations of the Mid-North Thompson River Region, British Columbia, (Victoria: Heritage Conservation Branch, 1983), 10.

[27] As quoted in Mary Balf, The Dispossessed. Interior Indians in the 1800s (Kamloops: Kamloops Museum, 1978), 10-11.

seen... [with] dead bodies lying everywhere."[28]

The smallpox epidemic must have continued with force; in the next year Viscount Milton, while retracing the route of the Overlanders, observed many Natives lying dead by the river just a few miles south near present-day Clearwater due to the "ravages of small-pox."[29] Even in the middle of the epidemic the Colonist reported confidently in an article detailing the merits of mining in the North Thompson that there were "no Indians on the river, as they nearly all died of smallpox this year."[30]

It is probable that the Colonist editorialised optimistically when presenting the North Thompson as a mining paradise without Indians. Many Natives had fled the villages and the disease which may account for the total absence of people. Nevertheless, these reports reveal the drastic, incisive nature of the disease, without looking at population statistics. The early census of Native populations was a political document since the size of reserves depended on it. Oral histories frequently re-count how census-reporters may have come for an afternoon and simply made a roll-call of those present even though many band members might have been absent.[31] Therefore, caution is advisable when the census figures are used to generate explanations about the

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[28] This location seems probable since they had overcome the rapids to the north and it would take them another four days to reach Kamloops. Mark S. Wade, The Overlanders of '62, (Surrey: Heritage House Publishing Company, 1981), 42.

[29] W.F. Viscount Milton and W.B. Cheadle, The North-West Passage by Land (Toronto: Coles Publishing Company, 1970), 308-309.

[30] British Colonist, 18 October 1862.

[31] Celesta, interview by author.

extent and effect of the smallpox epidemic of 1862.[32]

That the Native population was so diminished by the small pox epidemic[33] was doubly fateful since the epidemic was triggered by the mining incursions which in turn were the precursors to settlement. Settlement and Confederation brought about some urgency in the resolution of the Indian Land Question which the British Columbia and Federal Governments, through a joint Reserve Commission, attempted to solve or delay by creating Indian reserves.[34] The successive privations had compromised the Shuswap ability to resist or, at least, control white intrusion into their lands and to deal effectively with an unsympathetic provincial government.

The new reserves were established in the 1877 with the main North Thompson reserve being located at Chu Chua, north of Barriere. Some small, additional reserves were established near little Fort, and at Chinook Cove along the banks of the North Thompson River.[35] By the time

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[32] The historian Robin Fisher believes that "contemporary remarks about smallpox converting Indian 'camps into graveyards' should be treated with some caution..." He speculates that "during 1862 thousands of Indians were vaccinated, and by that time there must have been a degree of built-up immunity as a result of previous contact with the disease." (Robin Fisher, Contact and Conflict. Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1794-1890 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1978), 116.)

[33] Apparently, there had also been hunger epidemics in the 1840s and 1850s "when Indians throughout the district were on the verge of starvation by the spring, and in some years there were even deaths." (Balf, The Dispossessed, 5.)

[34] For a fuller discussion of the politics surrounding this process see Paul Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics. The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990.) and Fisher, Contact and Conflict.

[35] Reserve Commissioner Gilbert M. Sproat carried out an

of Teit's visit disease had decimated the population to a mere 130 in the Lower North Thompson band from an estimated census of 500 around 1850 (see Table 1).

The government and the church collaborated in establishing reserves. As is well documented, the various missionaries, among them the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who were active around the Kamloops and North Thompson area from 1859 onward, "viewed settlement into an agrarian lifestyle as a positive step for Native people."[36] Fisher has perceptively traced this prevalent sentiment to John Locke who, "in his Second Treatise of Government implies that an agricultural people might justly force a hunting population to alter its economy."[37] These beliefs, based on utilitarian conceptions of the land, were very popular during the colonial period and supplied the philosophical basis for contemporary church and government action.

The Simpcw were subject to combined church and government pressure during the establishment of the reserve in 1877.[38] Rather than co-operating overtly, the various levels of government and church officials held similar beliefs about Natives, their culture and future, which informed their position. They agreed, for example, that Natives should, as quickly as possible, adopt white language, culture and values,

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approximate survey of the North Thompson Indian reserve July 4 and 5, 1877.(B.C., Sessional Papers (1878): 504.) Details of the various reserves established by the Joint Commission in 1877 may be found in B.C., Sessional Papers (1885): 394 ff.

[36] Celia Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal (Vancouver: Tillacum Library, 1988), 24.

[37] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 104.

[38] See also Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, 51.

Table 1. Census of North Thompson Native Population 1850-1906

	1850[a]	1898	1903[b]	1906[b]
Upper North Thompson Band	250	. . .	70[c]	70
Lower North Thompson Band (Simpcw)	500	160[d]	130	130
Kinbaskets (Offshoot of Upper North Thompson now at Upper Canoe River)	150	. . .	56	62
TOTALS:	900	. . .	256	262

[a]Teit, "The Shuswap," 465. Teit's 1850 estimate was based on information "as furnished by an intelligent old Indian, who is particularly well posted on all matters concerning his people, and who had travelled extensively among almost all the bands of the tribes"(Ibid., 464.)

[b]1903 and 1906 population estimates are returns from the Federal Indian Department.

[c]Teit's estimate since there were no returns from the Federal Indian Department.

[d]Father Le Jeune's Census. Wilson, Heritage Resource Investigations, 12.

ironically, by way of preserving themselves as Indians. From this perspective, Native alliances, which were beginning to form throughout British Columbia, were considered counterproductive if not dangerous. In June 1877, Father C.J. Grandidier of the Oblate mission at Kamloops persuaded the Adams Lake Shuswap not to attend a combined council of Okanagan and Shuswap Natives. Held at the head of Okanagan Lake it was an attempt to confederate the two related Nations. Instead, Father Grandidier convinced the Adams Lake band to meet with Gilbert Sproat's Reserve Commission which was negotiating with the North Thompson Natives. Here, the Adams Lake and North Thompson Shuswap accepted a settlement while their relatives from Kamloops were at the Native council. When "Louis, the Kamloops leader returned, he was furious with these Indians for settling."[39]

However, collusion between missionaries and government officials was not as overt as this example suggests. The same Father Grandidier who had interfered in the nascent Native alliance had earlier protested forcefully against the persistent reduction of Native reserves and the unfairness of the provincial government's Indian Land policy.[40] It seems that collusion was tacit and its motivations complex so that "in some cases Oblate rhetoric and government rhetoric, although differently motivated did overlap and reinforce each other." [41]

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[39] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 193.

[40] Father C.J. Grandidier to the editor, Victoria Standard, 28 August 1874.

[41] Lynn A. Stewart, "Book Reviews," BC Studies, no. 109 (spring 1996): 85. Scholars currently debate the nature and extent of the cooperation between the Oblates and the various levels of government.

These developments have to be seen in the larger context of a possible Indian uprising in the interior in the summer of 1877 and recent events south of the white border. In June 1876, the Sioux under Sitting Bull inflicted an unnerving defeat on the United States Seventh Cavalry under Custer. In the spring of 1877 Sitting Bull crossed into Canada. During the summer of 1877, the Nez Perces under Chief Joseph fought the United States army and almost succeeded in escaping across the boundary.

The failure of these southern tribes to defend their land against the illegal intrusions of white settlers and the outrages committed by the United States Army affected the tribes of the British Columbia interior. The general nervousness in July 1877 of both the Indians and the reserve commission gave rise to the commissioners' "desperate telegram to Ottawa claiming 'Indian situation very grave from Kamloops to American border — general dissatisfaction — outbreak possible'"[42]

In time, the reserve commission managed to defuse the situation but largely at the expense of Native unity. Some old chiefs lost prestige because the younger generation perceived them as too docile in their negotiations with the whites. Not only did the reserve commission split Shuswap leadership but, "by playing off the old against the young, agreement could often be reached in situations which appeared

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Elizabeth Furniss points to some specific instances of such collusion surrounding the death of a young Shuswap boy at the St. Joseph's residential school near Williams Lake. (Elizabeth Furniss, Victims of Benevolence: The Dark Legacy of the Williams Lake Residential School (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1995).)

[42] Sproat and Alexander C. Anderson, to the Minister of Interior, 13 July 1877, quoted in Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 192.

impossible."[43]

The grids of the surveyed maps *norm*-alised Native — white relations as well as commented on Native ways of life. The boundaries of the grid excluded, isolated and alienated in that they created a seamless, contiguous web of crown land[44], a net in which the Native's "wandering state" was arrested, shrunk, and localised in the reserve. This was a similar parcel, equal in its parcel-ness to other surveyed sections in which the meandering, criss-crossing, grid-defying nomads were "properly" contained in an administered space.

The theme of progress minimises that the very character of boundaries of traditionally Native territory were modern inventions. There is evidence that boundaries had a different cultural value for traditional Native societies. Instead of the hard and firm boundaries of modern interpretations, with check points and clear, surveyed precision, boundaries may well have been the opposite of division: a zone of dialogue and communication. Instead of no-man's land, it may have been a zone of extra-ordinary cultural exchange notwithstanding battles over resources. The flexible nature of these zones is shown in the tolerance the Simpcw showed towards Sekani penetration of their land between the Upper Fraser and Upper North Thompson:

> An old man of the North Thompson division gave this account: [The Sekani] made this place their headquarters for several years, and the Shuswap made no great efforts to drive them out, for the fisheries there were of little value, and

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[43] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 193.

[44] Private property was "alienated" from the crown, "the crown" being the only postulated, pre-historic (in the sense of pre-settlement) land-owning authority.

> were never used, because the people had much better ones on the North Thompson River, where the fish were fatter and more plentiful.[45]

Only after the penetration and associated violence reached a certain point did the Simpcw seek the help and alliance of their associated southern, western, and eastern neighbours and repulse the Sekani. Even though the boundaries of Native territory has been fixed and defined in modern, western terms — hence the extent of the modern land claim — the character of the boundaries was different.

Since boundaries serve to distinguish and define "the other" it is important to speculate on how Natives perceived the white intruders. Carter has suggested that Australia's Aborigines did not perceive the whites as invaders but rather as visitors and traders, which might correspond to Native interpretation of Hudson's Bay Company men. There is evidence that Hudson's Bay Company men regarded themselves similarly. Carter offers the poignant observation that the aborigines did not think the whites would stay forever.[46] Therefore, they showed white settlers valuable springs and water-holes, rather like showing guests — and perhaps sharing with them — some of their valuables. By the time white intentions had become clear, there often were no Natives left to appreciate the changed dimensions of the cultural exchange.

However, the small-pox epidemic of 1862, which eradicated the entire, thriving Native community near present day Clearwater, annihilated the contiguous Native presence between the northern extent

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[45] Teit, "The Shuswap," 546.

[46] Paul Carter, Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History, (London, England: Faber and Faber, 1987), 165.

of the Simpcw, the friendly Canim band to the west, and the Sekani to the north. The few survivors who fled to Chu Chua retained some contact with the area. Henrietta Holt, an early settler, could remember seeing small groups of Indians migrating near present-day Vavenby in 1907: "There were many Indians in the Valley when we first arrived. We used to trade with them — bread and potatoes for fish, berries and venison." Mrs. Holt thought that "after the valley got too many settlers, the Indians cleared out somewhat" but Roger Tibbetts, another early settler, explained that "the Indians' numbers were greatly reduced by the 1918 flu epidemic."[47]

The severe cultural loss included lost family histories, knowledge of berry patches, fishing holes, and game trails.[48] Ethnobotanical knowledge, which can yield "many insights into the relationships between people and their environment" was also lost.[49] In short, the cumulative local knowledge could only be passed on in fragments.[50] In face of this disaster, contiguous, energetic resistance to white presence and culture was difficult, even in the sense that Natives might incorporate congenial aspects of white culture into their own culture, as

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[47] V. Lois Moss, The Home Trail, vol. II, (Clearwater: Yellowhead Publishing, 1982), 36, 87.

[48] Wilson, who conducted local archaeological studies found that in many cases, knowledge of family genealogy did "not go back beyond two generations at most because of the severe loss of life due to small pox, measles, and flu epidemics during contact and post-contact times." (Wilson, Heritage Resource Investigations, 70, 13.)

[49] Nancy Turner et al., Thompson Ethnobotany Knowledge and Usage of Plants by the Thompson Indians of British Columbia (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1990), 7.

[50] See Matthew and Matthew, "North Thompson Shuswap".

suggested by Fisher.[51]

With the reserves established, some Simpcw attempted farming but "hunting remained the main subsistence activity, and trapping was the main source of income."[52] The first village, Chuk-chu-qualk, which had been constructed on the North Thompson flood plain, was moved to higher and drier ground in the early 1900s. Disease again killed many Simpcw. In 1913, only vaccines prevented a major typhoid epidemic.[53] In the 1920s a flu epidemic ravaged the reserve, further reducing the population.

The ravages of disease and the demoralising imposition of the reserve system could not quell the traditional Simpcw independent and adaptive spirit. White settlement, which in the North Thompson did not begin in earnest until the first decade of this century, introduced a money economy and wage labour. The Simpcw worked as "cowboys, farmhands, and millworkers, in construction, and a few also worked for the Canadian Northern Railway."[54] There were regional differences in the importance of Native wage labour.[55] In the case of British Columbia's

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[51] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, postulated a vibrant Native Culture, quite capable of adapting and incorporating aspects of white culture without loosing sight of their own. Fisher thought the severe epidemics compromised Native adaptability.

[52] Wilson, Heritage Resource Investigations, 12.

[53] "Department of Indians Affairs, Annual Report," Canadian Sessional Papers 27, (1920), 52.

[54] Wilson, Heritage Resource Investigations, 13. See also Balf, Kamloops to 1914, 29 passim.

[55] For an example of a more general approach, see Rolf Knight, Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930 (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978).

southern interior, slower settlement "permitted the Natives to remain a dominant force in it for a much longer period of time than did the southern coastal Indians in theirs."[56]

However, the Simpcw ranked among the poorer tribes in the Interior in terms of wage labour. The annual per capita income for the North Thompson band was $80.00 for 1906 for a total income of $10,400, which lags behind an annual per capita income of $219.83 for the Okanagan band and $88.35 for the Kamloops band.[57] It may well be that self-sufficiency through hunting, gathering berries and agricultural activities on the reserve made the band less dependent on wage labour.

Further, few settlers, successful mines, or large scale logging operations in the area needed wage labour. The few white settlers in the area lived mainly on the income and self-sufficiency afforded by mixed farming until the arrival of commercial logging in 1941. Wage labour became a progressively less attractive income source for the Simpcw due to increasing white settlement, which coincided with mechanisation, lack of available capital, restrictive government regulations — for example, Natives were not allowed to pre-empt land — and the often overt racially motivated discrimination against Natives.

Today, the North Thompson band is relatively prosperous, owning and operating its own saw-mill and farming operations. They are a part of the social and economic fabric of the North Thompson valley and have tried to preserve their heritage. The Simpcw provided the only

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[56] James Burrows, "'A Much-Needed Class of Labour': The Economy and Income of the Southern Interior Plateau Indians, 1897-1910," BC Studies, no. 71 (Autumn 1986): 29.

dependable and continuous group resistance to the proposed water diversion from the North Thompson into the Columbia watershed whence it would supply California's thirsty — and ecologically disastrous — agriculture and swimming pools. When Chief Nathan Matthews spoke at a water-resource conference in Barriere, B.C., on January 30, 1993, he set the context of his speech by reminding his audience that the name of the river in the Shuswap language means "up there". The people who live there are called "Simpcw" or, "The people up there". Hence, the toponymy points to an affinity between people and river and informs how the Simpcw understand their heritage.

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[57] Ibid., 31.

CHAPTER III

EARLY VISITORS

Early white presence in the North Thompson area was tentative and economically motivated. The newcomers were economic nomads whether they were Hudson's Bay Company fur traders, miners, trappers, surveyors or real estate speculators. The initial Native understanding of these new comers as visitors who had not come to sink roots into the place but who were content to float through and disappear again seems not far off the mark. Only when the early white presence is postulated causally as part of settlement, colonisation and participation in the building of British Columbia do these few people assume a significance disproportionate to their numbers.

Like many other areas of British Columbia, the early white history of the North Thompson area is connected to the fur trade. During the fall of 1811, the Astorians David Stuart and Alexander Ross arrived near present day Kamloops and began to trade for beaver pelts. In November 1812, Joseph La Rocque of the North West Company built a post at Kamloops after having travelled south through the North Thompson Valley. In the next year, the Astorians sold out to the North West Company which continued to expand its trade and its post. The amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821 did not hurt "Thompson's River Post" nor did it damage the fur trade on the "North Branch".

So lively was the fur business that as early as 1828, during his brief two-day visit to Kamloops, Governor George Simpson heard reports of over-trapping threatening the abandonment of the post.[1] However, by 1851 the fur trade must have briefly recovered since Kamloops Chief Trader Fraser opened Little Fort about ninety kilometres north of Kamloops to facilitate the lucrative trade with the Simpcw. The post, which was built on the east side of the river, opposite the present location of Little Fort, stayed open for only one year because the company decided regular trips up the river would eliminate the expensive maintenance of the post and serve the area more efficiently.

Little Fort was not the only Hudson's Bay Company experiment on the North Thompson. In 1859, the Company established an experimental dairy farm fifteen miles north of Kamloops. Heavy rainfall during the harvest season ruined the experimental garden crop, and added to other difficulties: "men were few; the plough was in a shocking state; floods were bad; [and] mosquitoes were unbearable."[2] As a result, the farm was abandoned that same year.

From 1826 to 1842 the North Thompson Valley formed part of the brigade trail network which connected the various Hudson's Bay Company posts from the Pacific to the Peace River. From Kamloops, then located on the eastern bank of the North Thompson, the trail followed that river north to present-day Little Fort. This point was then known as "The Traverse" (The Crossing) because the entire brigade would

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[1] See Balf, Kamloops to 1914, 8.

[2] William Manson, a clerk at the Kamloops Hudson's Bay Company

ford the river to continue westward via Lemieux Creek to gain the plateau near Lac des Roches. The route changed in 1843 when Chief Trader John Tod relocated Thompson's River Post to the west side of the North Thompson. Now the brigades followed the combined Thompson River and Kamloops Lake shore westward and ascended the plateau via the Deadman and Bonaparte Rivers.[3]

The discovery and subsequent trade of gold in 1856 marked the beginning of the end of the Hudson's Bay Company trade monopoly in British Columbia. Perhaps the first gold found by whites in British Columbia was taken from the North Thompson. J.S. Helmcken later remembered that

> One night in 1857, when at dinner in the Mess Hall [in Victoria], Douglas produced a few grains of scale gold which he said had come from the North Thompson. He alone of the assembled company seemed impressed with the significance of the find: he attached, he said 'great importance to it and thought it meant a great change and busy time'.[4]

Governor James Douglas, of course, was correct in his predictions, and a "busy time" commenced in the colony and on the North Thompson. Prospectors swarmed through the North Thompson region. Their tell-tale diggings are so numerous that they might be confused with Native cache pit sites.[5] Thus began an episode of mining characterised by impetuous,

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post, quoted in Balf, Kamloops to 1914, 12.

[3] See F.W. Howay, "British Columbia Brigade Trails," The Beaver (June 1938): 48-51. Also E.P. Creech, "Brigade Trails of B.C.," The Beaver (March 1953): 10-15.

[4] John S. Helmcken, The Reminiscences of Doctor John Sebastian Helmcken, ed. Dorothy Blakey Smith, vol. 3, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press), 119.

[5] See the caution in Wilson, Heritage Resource Investigations, 11.

overly optimistic beginnings and often depressing results — a pattern characteristic of much of the province's mining history. Despite repeated, obvious failures, individuals and companies persisted in their efforts.

Numerous reports of early mining activity chronicle the general north-easterly movement of the miners. The gold Governor Douglas held in his hands in 1857 was mined on Tranquille Creek which empties into the Thompson near Kamloops. Chief Trader Donald McLean then carefully forwarded it to Victoria.[6] During 1861, Chinese miners who tried their luck along the banks and bars of the "North Branch" river made various reports of gold.[7] On August 12, 1861, the Victoria British Colonist reported "one party of Frenchmen at a place above Kamloops called Barrier [sic]. They expected to take out about $25 per day to the hand."[8] By September, the newspaper claimed that each of these miners was extracting earnings as high as $50 per day.[9] The historian Hubert Bancroft, who may have relied on John Tod for much of this information, believed that "the Indians found coarse gold above the junction of the Clearwater."[10] In February, 1862, the British Colonist outdid all its

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[6] Balf, Kamloops to 1914, 82.

[7] For more detail, see Muriel Dunford, "History of Mining in the Upper North Thompson-Clearwater Area," (Clearwater: unpublished manuscript, 1975).

[8] British Colonist, 12 August 1861.

[9] British Colonist, 16 September 1861.

[10] Hubert Howe Bancroft, The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, vol. XXXII, (San Francisco: History Company, 1887), 459. John Tod features prominently in Bancroft's text.

previous efforts and created in the minds of its readers a northern Eldorado of paradisical proportions. Since many miners hoped to strike it rich on the North Thompson, the Hudson's Bay Company post in Kamloops did a thriving trade in supplying them.[11]

In July that year the colonial government dispatched a party under Mr. O'Grady to find out more about the gold in the area. In the same month, two miners, Harrison and Sexton, ascended the North Thompson only to return, disappointed, three weeks later. They shared their findings with the Colonist which, again, extolled the mineral virtues of the region including as a benefit the total absence of Indians.[12] To miners this meant that there would be no disputes over land ownership between Natives and miners.[13]

Late summer that year the famous Overlanders descended the river on their journey to the Cariboo goldfields. Writers have remarked on "the courage and determination of these pioneers"[14] although the actual story is more prosaic. The travellers' motivation was gold. They were singularly unprepared for their venture which resulted in repeated

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[11] "Made pretty tolerable sales today for cash and gold dust to parties bound up North River."(Hudson's Bay Company Journal, 18 September 1862 quoted in Dunford, "History of Mining," 7.)

[12] British Colonist, 18 October 1862.

[13] Friction over land use and ownership on Lake Okanagan was the subject of William Cox's letter to R.C. Moody, the Chief Commissioner of Lands. Cox concluded that "Mines have lately been discovered there, hence the altercations." (Cox to Moody, 12 February 1861, in British Columbia. Papers connected with the Indian Land Question, 1850-1875, (Victoria: Government Printer, 1875), 180.)

[14] Ida De Kelver, "Historical Trails and Trips through the Yellowhead," (unpublished manuscript), 2.

loss of life and capsizing of rafts — because they had not properly surveyed the river before entrusting their craft to its currents. It is surprising that so many of them reached Kamloops safely, on October 11, 1862.[15]

Indirectly connected with the mining excitement of the early 1860s was the journey by the adventurers Viscount Milton and Dr. Cheadle who travelled south along the North Thompson in 1863. They were not looking for gold — they were already well situated — but to look at the excitement connected with the gold rush. To some they were the "first tourists" of the North Thompson, "gentlemanly explorers" who had magnificent, lofty peaks named after them in the Rocky Mountains although they had barely escaped them in their naiveté. They were the Mr. Fogg and Passepartout of Jules Verne's 80 Days Around the World, gentlemen of leisure embarking on a romantic adventure to avoid the tedium of their aristocratic life. Milton managed to write the tale of their adventures: it clearly shows that they explored nothing but were "a mere party of pleasure."[16]

The heroic adventures of the Overlanders and Milton and Cheadle highlighted the need for much improved roads and trails. Newspaper editors and other boosters felt that the miners were the advance guard of white civilisation, that the progress of this civilisation was assured and a

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[15] See Wade, The Overlanders of '62. The first group reached Kamloops that day with the others arriving throughout the next few days. Similarly, much is made of the "birth of the first white baby at Kamloops" by Mrs. Schubert.

[16] W.B. Cheadle, Journal of a Trip Across Canada, 1862-63 (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishing, 1971), 220.

foregone conclusion and that everything possible should be done to facilitate the inevitable.[17] Typical of this sentiment was surveyor Walter Moberly's petition to the British Columbia Legislature to consider "opening some packtrails through the interior of the colony to enable miners to prospect."[18] It is a reflection of the belief in progress that Moberly thought the trails should be opened: in his mind the trails were already there, as was perhaps the outline of the glorious future of British Columbia, and they needed just to be liberated to reveal themselves in their predestined nature. This request to improve the colony's infrastructure was one of many similar ones, expressed publicly in newspapers and privately in journals. It is perhaps the mining industry's most lasting legacy that it encouraged surveying and mapping of the province, and that roads and trails were built and rivers connected by a vast infrastructure network of sternwheelers — the first mechanised transport in the colony.

By 1865, public attention began to shift away from the North Thompson to other areas of the province. In that year "the Orr prospecting expedition travelled as far as the Clearwater without apparently finding anything of value"[19] although in August, 1866, the B.C. Tribune reported that a group of miners who ascended the

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[17] Concurrent with this perspective was the belief that the Natives would vanish as a cultural factor, that British conceptions of government and civilization were unrivaled.

[18] James E. Hendrickson, ed., Journals of the Colonial Legislatures of the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia 1851-1871, vol IV, (Victoria: Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1980), 292.

[19] Bancroft, The Works, 505.

Clearwater River about fifty miles "discovered a quartz ledge on a tributary of it which appears to be very rich in silver."[20] At the same time, Chinese miners were active on both the North Thompson and Clearwater Rivers and their tributaries.[21] Apart from some ambitious but unsuccessful ventures such as the explorations of the Chu Chua Coal Company formed by the enterprising John Fremont Smith and some Kamloops entrepreneurs in 1893 to exploit the coal seams near the present-day Native reserve near Chu Chua,[22] commercial mining in the North Thompson was confined to small scale placer claims until World War One.

Survey and Transportation Before 1912

By the 1870s, the Canadian Pacific Railway was doing prospecting of a different kind. As part of the Terms of Union, Canada had promised British Columbia that it would build a railway within ten years; it was, therefore, necessary to find a suitable route through the mountain ranges. From 1871 to 1874 CPR survey crews under Sanford Fleming [1872] and Joseph Hunter [1874] assessed the North Thompson and Clearwater River valleys for a potential railway grade westward. This activity promised wage labour for some miners and Natives who acted as

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[20] B.C. Tribune, 20 August 1866.

[21] See, for example, the Cariboo Sentinel, 13 October 1869. The presence of Chinese miners generally signalled that most of the easily accessible wealth had been removed from the river and only the marginalised and frugal Chinese would be satisfied by the reduced yield.

[22] It was planned entirely without Native involvement. The coal was too expensive to transport to Kamloops.

packers and local guides for the survey crews.

The CPR maintained a supply depot at the mouth of the Clearwater which, after 1872, was regularly re-provisioned by the small twelve ton sternwheeler Kamloops. By 1874, for example, the merchant Victor Guillaume "made frequent trips up the North Thompson with supplies for the CPR surveyors" from his store in Kamloops.[23] Much money and effort attended the North Thompson surveys. But in the meantime, they meant steady, albeit seasonal, employment for the survey crews and good times for the Kamloops merchants when the crews, having been paid their wages, headed into the little village in search of provisions, accommodation and entertainment. In this way, Kamloops again profited from its northern hinterland.[24]

By 1881 the CPR decided against the North Thompson route in favour of the Kicking Horse Pass. However, the surveys had added to local geographical knowledge and that information is reflected in the maps. Typical of these CPR surveys was Joseph Hunter's 1874 exploration of the Shuswap Highlands. With two Natives and three white packers he ascended the Clearwater River assessing whether the grade would be suitable for a rail connection to the Cariboo plateau. They also explored the highlands between Clearwater Lake and a lake which Hunter promptly named after his birthplace, Murtle, in Scotland.[25]

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[23] Balf, Kamloops to 1914, 39.

[24] See also Balf, Kamloops to 1914, 29.

[25] See G.P.V. Akrigg and H. Akrigg, British Columbia Place Names, (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1986), 206.

Early settlers were somewhat introspective and enjoyed the isolation afforded by awkward transportation links. Frank Allingham, for example, was a part-time miner and settler in the area beginning in 1888; over the years he wintered in Kamloops where he also served as an alderman in 1897 and 1898. By 1900 he had permanently settled on his ranch near Peavine, where he kept very much to himself. As a bachelor with some peculiar habits, he became the subject of local gossip.[26]

By 1891 a road was built to Louis Creek. In 1908 the packtrail on the river's east side connecting Barriere, Chu Chua and Little Fort was expanded to a wagon road and in 1910 Little Fort, then called Mount Olie after an early settler, became accessible by a good wagon road along the west side of the North Thompson. The valley was also serviced by irregular but frequent sternwheeler trips as far north as Vavenby.

The maps of 1883, 1892, and 1914, (see Figures 3, 4, and 5), summarise the state of contemporary geographical knowledge and belief. The 1883 map, although its outlines resemble those of a modern map to some degree, was a very tentative effort. Despite Hunter's explorations, Murtle Lake was missing as were such other large lakes of the area, like Hobson, Azure and Mahood Lake. In fact, the map maker could not have fitted Murtle and Azure Lake between the North Thompson and the Clearwater rivers because he collapsed the area between these two valleys on the map. He also rendered the Canoe river out of proportion to the North Thompson.

On the 1892 map the Clearwater, Hobson, and Azure Lake trio was

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[26] See Moss, Home Trail, vol. II, 60-61 and vol. III, 1-2.

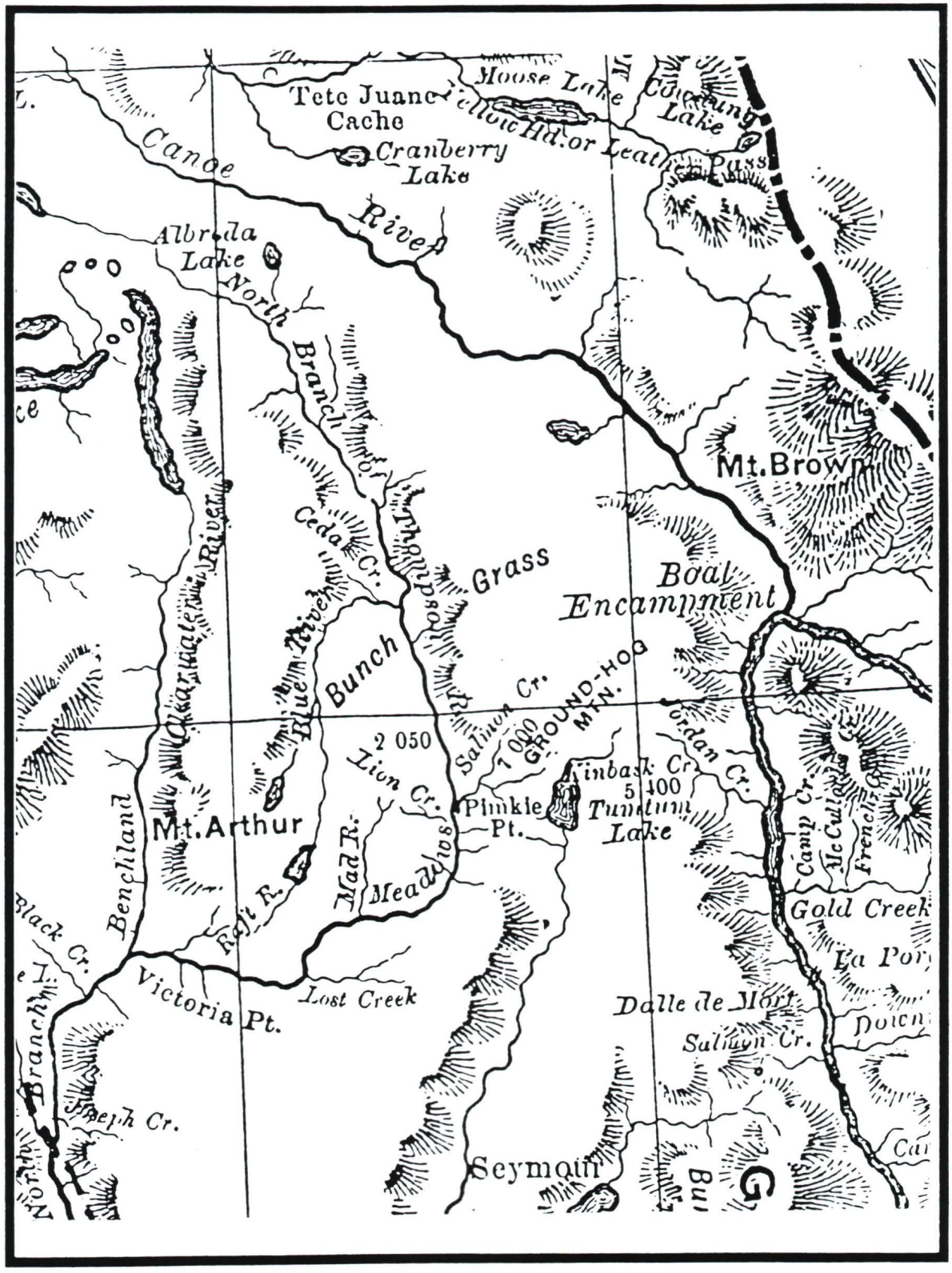

Figure 3. Map of 1883. After "New Map of British Columbia," (1883), BCARS CM/A131.

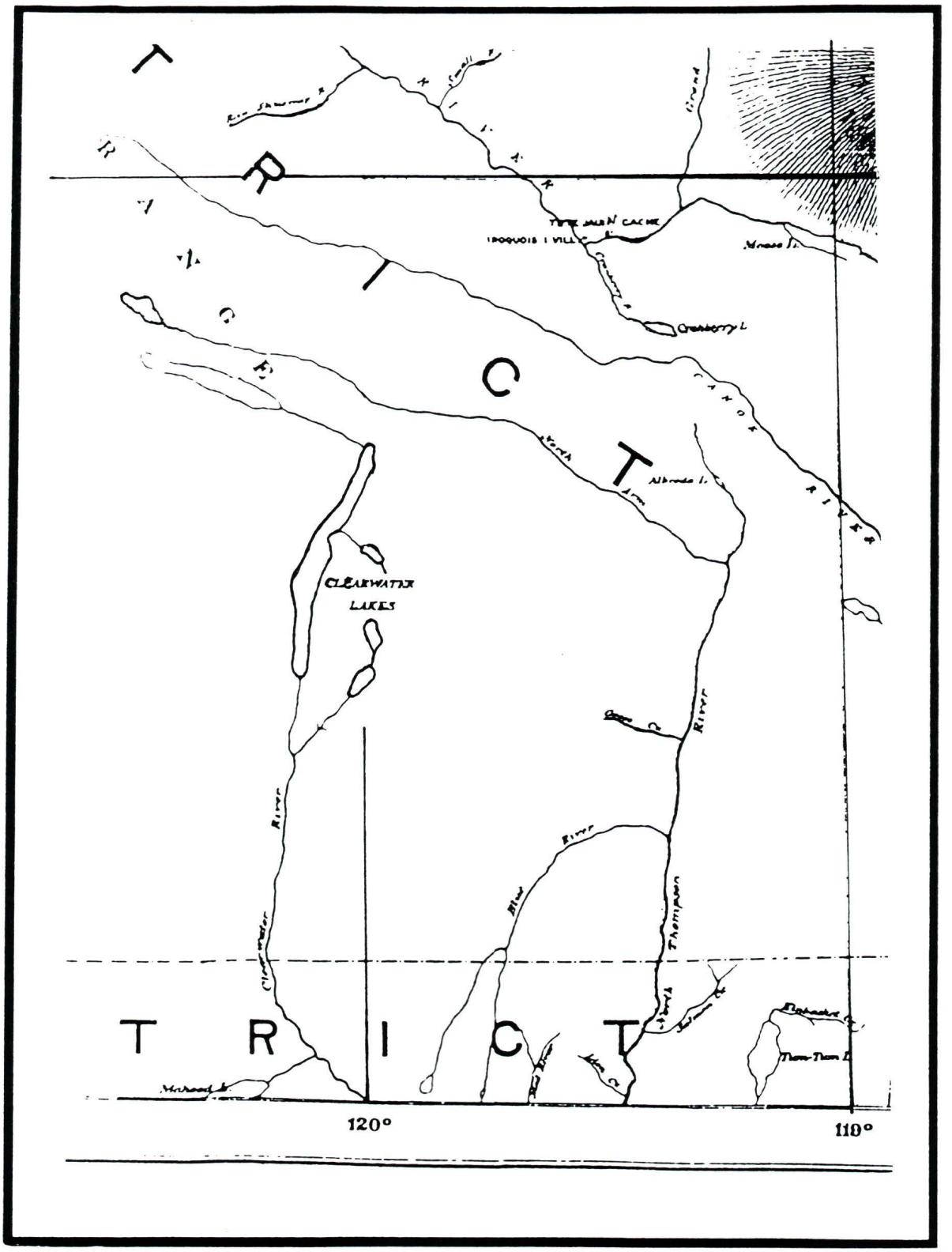

Figure 4. Map of 1892. After "Map of the Central Portion of British Columbia," (Department of Lands and Works, 1892), BCARS CM/C416.

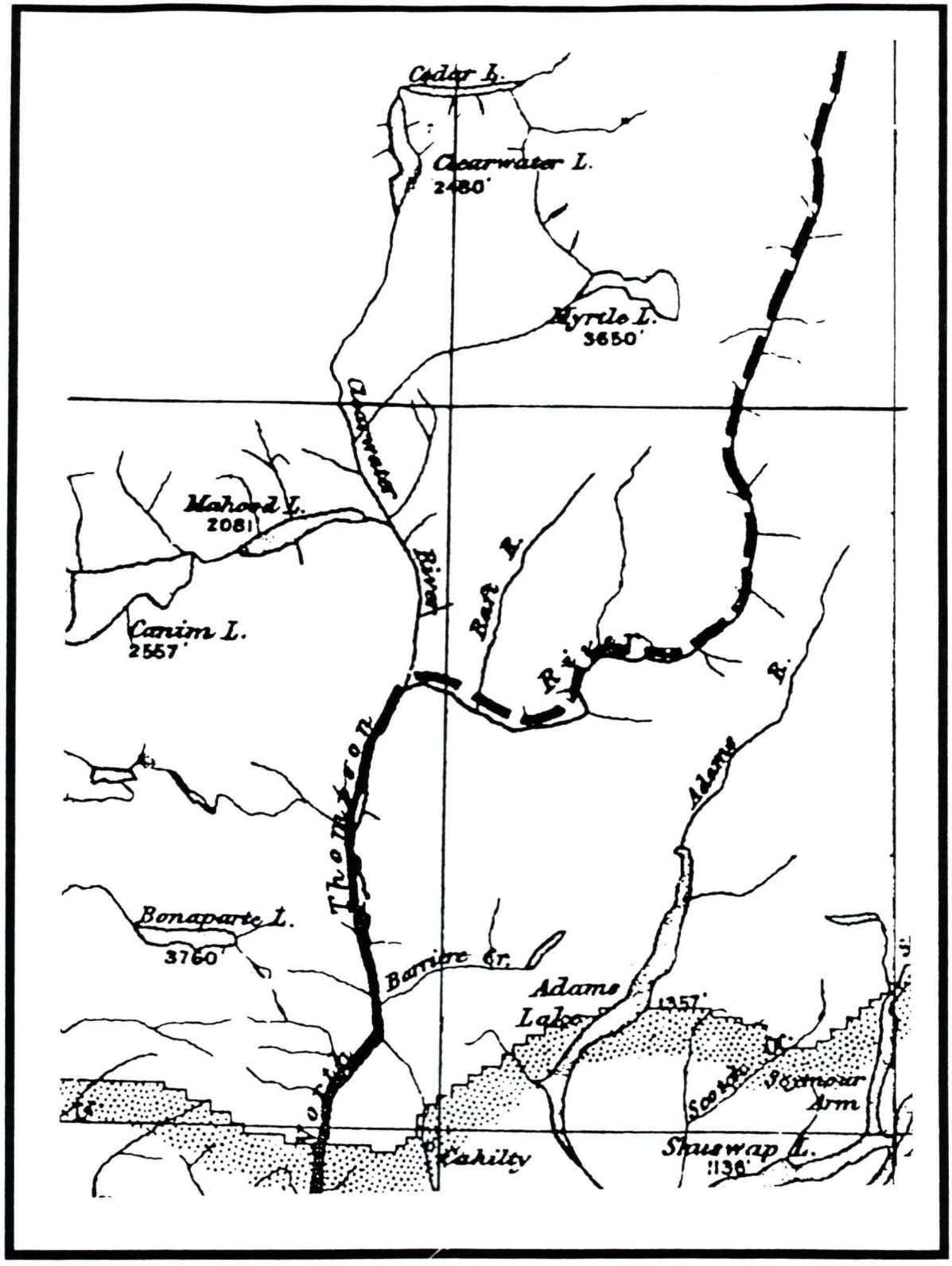

Figure 5. Map of 1914. After Western Canada, (Ottawa: Canada, Department of Interior, 1914), BCARS CM/C109.

still misunderstood, Murtle Lake still missing and the Canoe River over-represented. The 1914 map filled in some of these lacunae, yet, despite recent surveys by Lee and Green, Hobson Lake was still missing and Murtle Lake misrepresented. Although incomplete, the maps presented the illusion of contiguous wholeness: they followed the conventions of a completed map, the scientific method boldly alluded to in the clear rectangular cartographical grid.

Contemporary cartographical knowledge was clearly fragmented but this was glossed over to yield finished maps, similar to how the theme of progress orders evidence into a contiguous theory to minimise fragmentation. The map makers must have known about some obvious holes in their cartographical evidence; whereas previous efforts, such as Trutch's map of the 1870s had acknowledged these lacunae through bold comments such as "unexplored", that lack of knowledge is not admitted in these three later maps. The 1883 map preserves some of the former approach by the insertion of general comments: the west bank of the lower Clearwater was termed "Benchland", the North Thompson's north bank near present-day Avola was said to have "Meadows" and the Blue River valley was home to quantities of "Bunch Grass". In their general characterisation and their appeal to the map-reader's imagination, these descriptions admit to a lack of specific knowledge. Similarly, mountains and valleys were indicated in general symbolic form disclosing the poverty of specific information.

The map of 1892 still preserves the symbolically characterised mountains, although only the Rocky Mountains are indicated with the rest of the topography left to the reader's imagination. There are no

other general comments. The 1914 map left out any symbolic reference to topography but added the elevations for various lakes. Boldly shown are the routes of the CPR and CNR, the northern extent of the CPR railway belt and, to a lesser extent, the Cariboo Road. The rectangular stepping stones of the railway belt survey preserve and emphasise the autonomy of the survey process: the meandering valley of creeks, rivers and lakes are sacrificed to the triumph of the straight line. The land of the 1914 map is de-individualised in preparation of the survey grid of the District Lot maps.

Construction of the Canadian Northern Railway

Life soon changed in the North Thompson. Beginning about 1904 and lasting to the fall of 1911 an economic boom of unprecedented scale combined with heavy capital investments from Europe and the United States fuelled real estate speculation throughout much of the province. The provincial government under Premier Richard McBride encouraged settlers from Europe, particularly Britain, through pamphlets praising the favourable conditions in the new land, the potential for fruit farms and the many possibilities for the gentleman-farmer. These years of boundless optimism became known as "McBride prosperity".

Railroad construction — and the promise of it — was closely tied to the real estate boom. In addition to several other railway construction projects throughout the province, the Mackenzie and Mann group entered an agreement with the provincial government to bring a third transcontinental line through the province adding to the CPR and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. The contract was formalised on October

19, 1909, although the premier had made a generalised announcement to the same effect in the previous January. Since "it was common knowledge that Mackenzie and Mann had been carrying on negotiations with the government for years"[27] speculators had tried to guess where in the province the new railway would be built.

The October announcement that the new line would parallel the North Thompson river sent a flurry of settlers into the valley intent on capitalising on the impending real estate boom. John Giesecke, represented a typical example of this transition period prior to full-scale settlement. In 1912, he wrote to his cousin in Germany encouraging him to emigrate to Canada. Here he revealed some of the economic optimism which had caused him to settle in the area:

> there is a fine, free life here... . We have here a school, a post office, and a general store. It is said that we will have a railroad on our side of the river, too.[28]

Giesecke had just bought forty acres of bottom land for 400 dollars and some hillside land for $1.50 per acre. He speculated that within four to five years the bottom land would be worth 300 dollars per acre and hillside land, twenty dollars per acre.

In these booming years, optimism was found even in areas with a very marginal infrastructure on the fringes of the prevalent economic development. Railway activity increased traffic on the river. The sternwheelers, such as the Distributor which operated on the North

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[27] Margaret Ormsby, British Columbia: A History (Vancouver: Macmillan, 1958), 355.

[28] John Giesecke to his cousin, trans. E.W. Giesecke [the writer's son] in B.C. Historical News (Summer 1982): 22-24.

Thompson from 1912 until 1916, formed the backbone of this activity and had an enormous appetite for fuel wood. This translated into ready cash for settlers who needed a winter income. The railway company bought the wood at three dollars a cord, a considerable sum; a railway worker earned $2.75 per day whereas a person could cut well beyond a cord of wood per day.[29] In addition, Giesecke speculated with land and hoped for a handy profit once the new railway brought in the new, permanent settler-families as had happened after 1885 on the CPR lines and many railway corridors after that. But first the land had to be surveyed.

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[29] The wood was left in large "slabs" rather than cut and split into small pieces.

CHAPTER IV

THE SURVEYORS

> There is nothing like a little surveying
> to create the illusion of ownership.
> W.A. Taylor, *Crown Lands*

The surveyors whom the British Columbia government dispatched to the area in connection with the building of the CNR were similar to their earlier colleagues in that they had no intention of staying on the land. However, they were keenly aware of their crucial role in the project of settlement: the survey grid they were about to mark on the land would arrest the shifting demographic map and set the stage for the arrival of a stable settler-society in the same way as a farmer marks out a field to get it ready for ploughing and planting. Their influence should not be underestimated. Historically, surveyors have "marched alongside soldiers, initially mapping for general information, and eventually as a tool of pacification, civilisation, and exploitation in the defined colonies."[1] Rather than an adjunct, their maps constituted a vital step in the colonisation process. On them, "the British created an imperial space defined by European principles which enabled them to reduce immense diversity to a rational and ultimately controllable structure"[2] Rather than minor actors in the drama of colonisation, surveyors were "the point

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[1] Sparke, "Between Demythologizing and Deconstructing."

[2] Matthew H. Edney, "The Patronage of Science and the Creation of Imperial Space: The British Mapping of India, 1799-1843,"

men of British imperialism".[3] They developed and applied a uniform grid which collapsed all human and geographical differences into a single and territorial concept, which could be expanded limitlessly. The surveyors of the North Thompson applied these principles with vigour.

Not only did they cut the land into the blocks of the grid and offer optimistic descriptions of its potential, their maps excluded Natives by erasing their presence with finality. From now on this would be white man's country, the occasional group of wandering Natives serving as the exception proving the rule. The surveyors organised land into zones: agricultural zones for the settlers and timber lands for future industry with a vertical zoning which allowed for mining rights, even under private land. The survey of the Native reserves in 1877 completely integrated them into the governmental land management in that they constituted just another zone.

One of the most striking features of a District Lot map of British Columbia is the apparent contrast between the rugged, organic lines of the country's topography, and the wilful imposition of the surveyor's grid on it. Lakes were bisected at right angles, the surveyor's grid ignored the naturally meandering river — shot into and out of its banks and waters — backed into impossible hillsides all because surveyors were bound by the cardinal points of the compass and had to let their lines run straight for specified distances. It seems that the grid lent itself more readily to the survey and demarcation of North America's vast prairies.

Cartographica 30, no. 1 (spring 1993): 61.

[3] Ibid., 62.

However, the District Lot system, which evolved from several previous systems, has been characterised as being particularly accommodating to the British Columbia's settlement patterns. W.A. Taylor, a historian of survey techniques, claims that "this District Lot System is the most widely used in the Province because of its flexibility for use in unsurveyed areas."[4] To a minor extent this flexibility accommodates the topography of the given area. The statutes of 1874 specified the possible surveyed dimensions of a District Lot:

> several alternative lengths were cited in chains. Either 40 x 40 chains, 20 x 80 chains, 40 x 80 chains, 20 x 20 chains, 20 x 40 chains, or 20 x 60 chains.[5]

A glance at the North Thompson District Lot map will identify some exceptions to the usual lot dimensions of 40 x 40 chains. In the Blackpool area, District Lot #3738 has the shape of a narrow rectangle unlike District Lots #3739 and #3740 which are square (see Figure 6). The different shapes of the lots were used to maximise access to roads, lake or river frontage. However, the flexibility of the system was most useful for surveyors since it did not require them to tie their work to that of others. This was congenial to the peculiar character of British Columbia's settlement pattern, where

> in general all land in British Columbia is open to "stake and advertise" one's intention to acquire it, subject to statutory limitations and reserves [see for example, legend on Pre-Emptor's Series maps]. Areas are not necessarily developed progressively, and pioneer types repeatedly acquire remote areas where it is uneconomical to tie the new survey to

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[4] W.A. Taylor, Crown Lands: A History of Survey Systems (Victoria: Surveyor General Branch, Ministry of Crown Lands, 1990).

[5] Ibid., 25. A chain is sixty-six feet long.

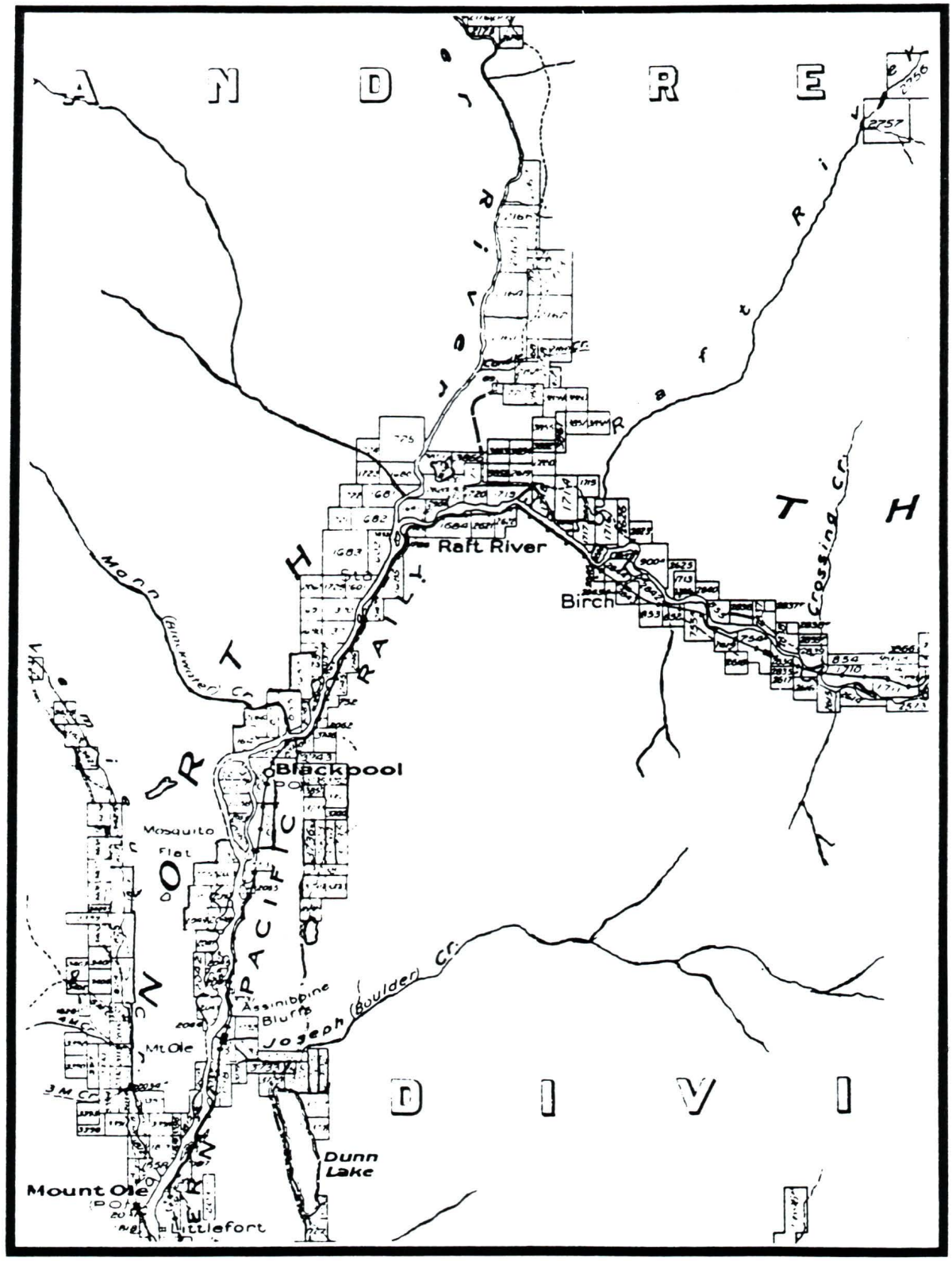

Figure 6. North Thompson District Lot Map. After "Pre-Emptor's Map: North Thompson Sheet," (Victoria: Department of Lands, 1915), BCARS CM/C234.

former ones.[6]

Some examples of these pioneer surveyors in the North Thompson area include early settlers like Frank Allingham near modern-day Vavenby or John Ray in Wells Gray Park. T.A. Moilliet's geographical sketch of 1907, hand-drawn without the benefit of an accurate official map, points out the approximate and relative position of the early settlers' pre-emptions at that time (see Figure 7). These had to be somehow integrated into an official system when the valley was officially surveyed after 1912.

The flexibility of the system, however, did not accommodate the organic topographical realities of the landscape. A creek, road, or railway would not form an acceptable natural boundary, nor would a District lot be defined by a sudden drop-off or precipice. The landscape was blanketed by the grid because it was an efficient rational means of parcelling the land while maintaining a notion of fairness and equality between the individual lots. It permitted rapid progress of the survey and the inventorying of large segments of British Columbia's geography.

In addition to bringing British Columbia's interior under the domain of the grid, the survey provided accurate maps at a time when these were at a premium. As a result of the great settlement boom and the timberland speculation in 1906 and 1907, the provincial government formed a Department of Lands out of the old Department of Lands and Works and gave it the responsibility for surveys. As late as 1912, "the provincial government charged a subdivision of the Surveys Branch with

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[6] Ibid.

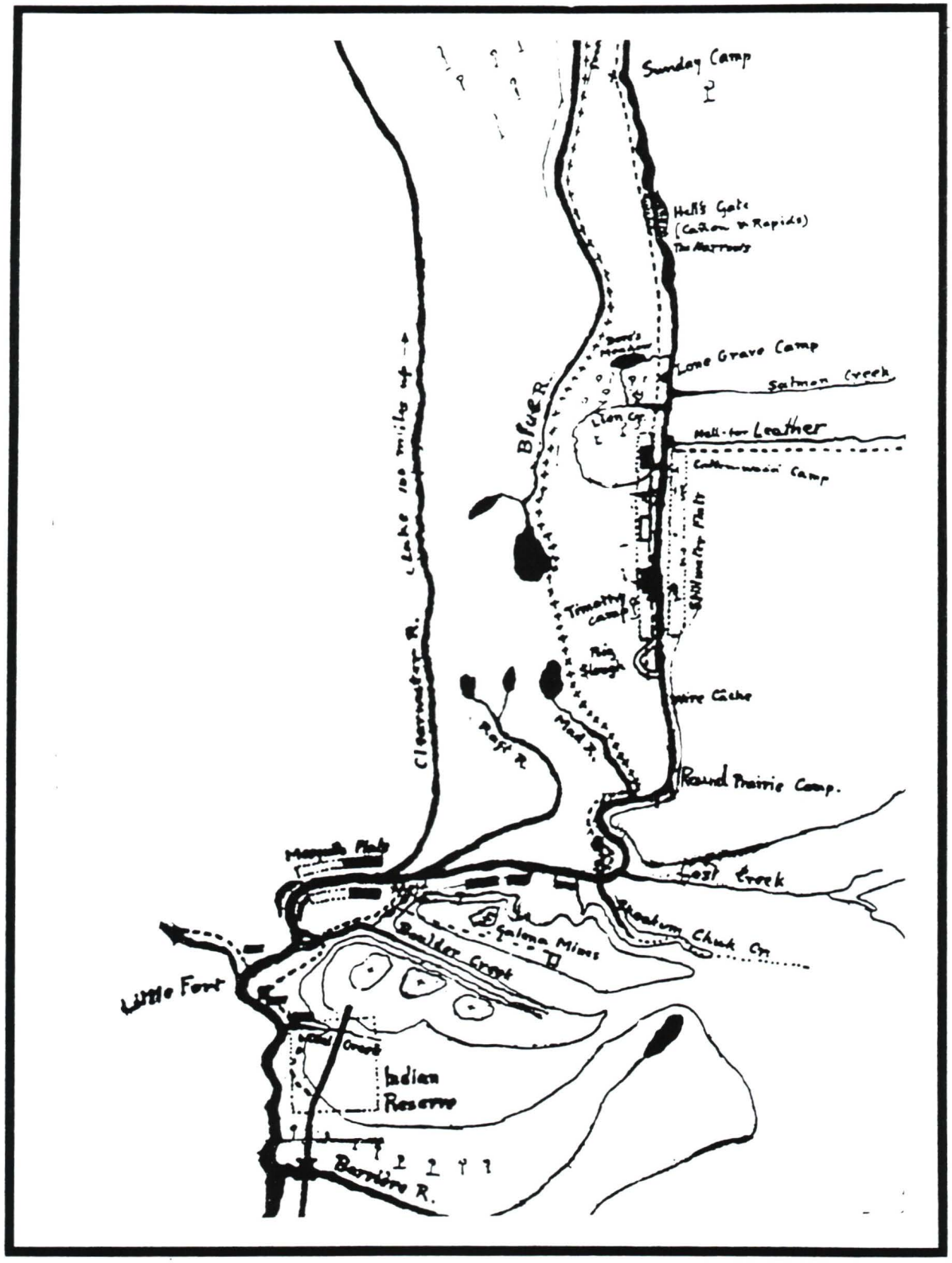

Figure 7. Map of 1907. After T.A. Moilliett's hand-drawn "sketch-map of the North Thompson."

preparing and publishing maps of the province."[7]

However, the apparently rational aspects of the grid, its evenness, the persuasive and impartial character of its right angles all hide the luxury and excessive size of the individual plots. Given contemporary methods it would have taken the average family and their semi-mechanised farm equipment a long time to use the full 160 acres of their quarter-section. Therefore, the uneconomic splinters of land on the other side of a road, railway, or river or at the top or bottom of a precipice were of no consequence to settlers who had enough work just to begin farming on the quarter-section's most desirable lands and could well afford not to have to worry about the less accessible places on their domain. At the same time, the princely size of the average 160 acre lot impressed settlers from Europe who were used to much smaller land holdings. Increased mass-production during the 1920s which brought mechanisation within the reach of the average farmer justified the large lots after the fact. Little wonder that governmental policies of quick surveys and generously-sized lots, combined with overly optimistic appraisals of the area's climate and agricultural potential fuelled the settlement boom during the ten years prior to World War One, which also populated the North Thompson Valley.

Other reasons for the settlers' ready acceptance of the grid lay in its historical significance. While discussing aspects of the nineteenth century urban grid in Australia Carter observed that

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[7] Don W. Thomson, Men and Meridians: The History of Surveying and Mapping in Canada, 1867-1917, vol. 2, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), 128.

> The grid plan had no direct economic significance, no direct impact on social development. It cannot even be said to have a clear political meaning. In this context, any historical importance the grid might have would seem to be so circumstantial as to be negligible. But, even as we say this, it is hard not to see in this a paradox. For, if the grid has no historical significance, how does it enter history? ... The fact is, that even if the nature of its historical significance is hard to define, the grid plan has undeniably been a *traditional* solution.[8]

The grid's tradition, which has transcended original reasons for its existence has produced a familiarity:

> When the colonists take up residence they do so not because they spontaneously react to the government's authority but because they recognize the space. It is familiar. It speaks to them.[9]

Familiarity with the grid re-invests the straight and perpendicular shapes which compete with the strange, exotic topographical lines on the maps with importance to the settlers: they could attach meaning to them from which to expand their local knowledge in ever increasing concentric epistemological circles not unlike a child beginning to imbue the world with meaning.

In addition to their important role for the settler, the surveyors acted as the extension of government, eyes and ears, taking detailed notes of what they thought would be useful to government, settler, and investor. The most detailed inventory of the region began with two reports to the Minister of Lands in 1912 and 1913, respectively, when the British Columbia government sent two surveyors to survey the Upper North Thompson valley and the area around present-day Valemount and

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[8] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 210.

[9] Ibid.

to organise it into District Lots. Their reports, published in the British Columbia, Sessional Papers and therefore accessible to any interested person, contained detailed observations regarding climate and agricultural potential of the area.

The surveyors also reported on the extent of settlement. Information eventually became portable in the form of the popular Pre-Emptor Series Maps which the provincial government had published since 1912; the first North Thompson map appeared in 1915 (see Figure 6). Generally, these early survey reports were very optimistic as regarded the economic potential of the area.

Surveyors R.H. Lee and F.C. Green, both working in the area in 1913, wrote glowing reports about the region and the Clearwater River Valley in particular. W.S. Drewry wrote similarly in 1923. In addition to the Minister of Lands, for whom they were written, these reports had other audiences. They provided considerable detail for the settler. Lee, for example, furnished a very precise chapter of "means of access" for "any person intending to locate and settle in the Clearwater Valley"[10] and for the prospective investor or business person. Both groups would be interested in the commercial possibilities of the region.

Lee, in particular, was a booster of this area. He noted that "the possibility of [hydro-electric] power-development from this [Clearwater] river and its tributaries is almost beyond comprehension."[11] Since

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[10] R.H. Lee, "Clearwater Valley" in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, 1913, British Columbia, Sessional Papers, (Victoria: King's Printer, 1914), D499.

[11] Ibid., D446. Lee lived in Kamloops where he was a mayor from 1894 to 1896 and later became a city engineer. His background and the

references to power development occurred in all these earlier survey reports of the area (ca. 1910-1928), it seems likely that the government requested specific information, perhaps in the form of a checklist with questions regarding the potential for mining, logging — including a pulp and paper industry, — agriculture, and hydro-development. In addition, early tourists must have been gratified to read about the nature and availability of game mammals and game fish.

Lee did not shy away from making bold claims about the Upper Clearwater valley's agricultural potential:

> I cannot recommend this as a stock-raising country, as the range required for this purpose is lacking; for mixed farming, however, I believe it to be unsurpassed by any section of country in the interior of British Columbia. Needless to say, disappointment is in store for any one expecting to find a quarter-section of cleared or meadow land, seeded with timothy, and with a modern farm-house ready to step into; but a man who is willing to work and is looking for a 160 acre lot upon which to settle and to make a home would do well to investigate this valley, for the soil is first-class and the climate unexcelled by any immediate district.[12]

However, F.C. Green, whose survey continued Lee's effort northward cautioned that "there is much stony land in the valley."[13] Similarly, Fred Ludtke, who arrived in the valley with his parents in 1923, thought that growing conditions in the Hemp Creek Valley, one of the areas Lee had particularly praised, were not favourable:

at that time, they couldn't grow potatoes — it was too damp

Kamloops business establishment's general goal of developing the North Thompson valley probably influenced his views.

[12] Ibid., D447.

[13] F.C. Green, "Clearwater Valley" in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, 1913, British Columbia, Sessional Papers, (Victoria: King's Printer, 1914), D450. Apparently, "the only sure crop in the Upper Clearwater valley are rocks." (Bert Gabelhaus, interview by author, 20 October 1992, Clearwater).

> and cold. ... The evergreens kept the land colder then, before the fire.[14]

Potatoes were essential to the self-sufficient farmer. Settlers hesitated to move to an area where potatoes did not grow easily. Comparing the Upper Clearwater to the main North Thompson valley, Lee had said that he had "not the slightest hesitation in saying that the climate [in the Upper Clearwater valley was] ... first class, far surpassing that of the North Thompson Valley"[15]

The many reports about the successful market-gardens in the North Thompson valley proved Lee wrong. Not only did these settlers not experience any difficulties growing potatoes but, on the contrary, the settlers in the area from Blackpool to Vavenby sold a considerable surplus of strawberries and cultivated raspberries to Vancouver, the Prairies and markets in the United States. Through most of the 1920s, 1930s and the mid 1940s this was one of the few means of generating a cash income.[16] Clearly, the settlers in the main valley benefited from their proximity to the CNR which transported their perishable crops to points of sale. However, the reasons for frustrated agricultural efforts in the Upper Clearwater were a colder, wetter climate and often rocky soil rather than poor transportation links.

A.W. Johnson, who surveyed the Upper North Thompson River in the 1911 and 1912 seasons commented that the area around Albreda

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[14] Fred Ludtke quoted in Moss, Home Trail, vol. III, 52. He referred to the 1926 fire mentioned in the introduction.

[15] Lee, "Clearwater Valley" in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, D447.

[16] For contemporary and remembered accounts see Moss, The

would

> be a rich valley when the timber is taken off and the land open for pre-emption. Settlers are flocking into the country fast. Around Cranberry Lake there are a dozen who have at least built their cabins, and on the Albreda summit two more have brought their families out and are farming on quite an extensive scale.[17]

Forester H.B. Murray, who undertook a forest survey of the North Thompson valley north of Louis Creek to the confluence of the Albreda and North Thompson rivers gave a less charitable description:

> The Thompson Valley north of Blue River is hemmed in on both sides by very high snow-clad mountains ... elevations of 7000 and 8000 ft. being common. This rough country is practically useless but by placing it under a game reserve and protecting the caribou, goat, grizzly bear etc. which roam in the hills a possible revenue may be derived.[18]

Elsewhere, he portrayed these northern reaches of the valley as "assuming in some places the nature of a ravine."[19] In 1920, Forester A.P. Horne who had just concluded a timber cruise in the Upper North Thompson sized up the area's agricultural potential more directly: "winters are cold and summers cool.... The long, hard winter and frequent summer rains preclude any possibility of farming or dairying."[20]

Surveyor Johnson's overly optimistic appraisal may have reflected the McBride government's ambitious settlement policies which

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Home Trail, vol. II, 9, 14-15, 50 and vol. III, 39, 43, 64, 75, 76.

[17] A.W. Johnson, "Report on Surveys Between Tete Jaune Cache and the North Thompson River, on the Route of the Canadian Northern Railway," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, 1913, British Columbia, Sessional Papers, (Victoria: King's Printer, 1914), D 294.

[18] H.B. Murray, Report on Reconnaissance of North Thompson and Barrier [sic] Rivers (Kamloops: Forest Branch, February, 1914), 39.

[19] Ibid., 4.

[20] A.P. Horne and W.W. Stevens, Cruise of Upper North Thompson,

highlighted the area's suitability for the settler-farmer. In contrast, the timber cruising reports reflected a stress on the forest resources. Since the best-producing and most accessible forest land is in the valleys, settlers with their small landholdings would have hindered a broadly conceived timber harvesting policy, either by the government or an industrialist. Therefore, Horne and Stevens were more direct in their negative appraisal of the area's value for the settler.

Little evidence of farming remains. In 1923, E.C. Cameron, the teacher of the Albreda school, wrote in her report that "most of the inhabitants are CNR employees" even though she listed as the chief industry of the district "agriculture and trapping".[21] In this case agriculture could not provide a sufficient income for a family. It seems that most people were CNR employees first, but to supplement their income, they engaged in agriculture and trapping. The 1928 report listed logging as the district's chief industry, suggesting the end of the experiment in agriculture:[22] the land was too cold and wet and the elevation too high.

But in 1913, Johnson had portrayed a rush of anxious settlers eager to take up land in the Upper North Thompson:

> No sooner did we complete a quarter-section than it was staked. Speaking of settlers brings one naturally to the question the suitability of farming. The benches in the vicinity of Cranberry Lake are composed of clay loam and will make first class farms when it is cleared of the

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(Kamloops: Forest Branch, 1920-21), 3.

[21] Albreda School, "School District Information Form, 1923" in Teacher's Bureau Records, (BCARS GR461).

[22] Albreda School, "School District Information Form, 1928" in Teacher's Bureau Records, (BCARS GR461).

timber....[23]

The careful reader, however would have been warned by some of the surveyor's other remarks. He cautioned that this was "undoubtedly a bad fly country"[24] and he described an area along the Canoe River (now submerged under Kinbasket Lake) as in "about as inaccessible a spot as could be found in British Columbia on the same latitude."[25]

Adjoining Johnson's survey to the south, surveyor H.R.M. Christie's "Report on Surveys in the Upper North Thompson Valley" oscillates in a similar way between optimism and attempts at a more realistic appraisal. Of the 102 quarter-sections he had surveyed, he concluded that between fifty to sixty had already been pre-empted. The remaining forty quarter sections were

> scattered along the valley, naturally consist of the poorest land and would not warrant the expenditure of any great amount of time on the part of intending land-seekers going into the valley from the outside.[26]

Land-seekers took up land strategically, claimed the good land, and left sections of poorer land that were too marginal to allow a late-comer to develop a successful farm. After improving the claimed parcel of land, as per legislation, and obtaining the deed to it, the settler pre-empted less desirable but contiguous parcels to enlarge the holding.

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[23] Johnson, "Report on Surveys," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, D294.

[24] Ibid., D295.

[25] Ibid., D293.

[26] H.R.M. Christie, "Report on Surveys in the Upper North Thompson Valley," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, 1913, British Columbia, Sessional Papers, (Victoria: King's Printer, 1914), D296.

Although Christie describes the good crop a pair of settlers raised on newly cleared land — eight tons of potatoes per acre "besides all kinds of vegetables and a small amount of oat hay," his remark is tempered by the observation that "the land ... is very low, and, according to what indications could be found of high-water mark of 1894, the flats would be from 5 to 6 feet under water should similar conditions occur again."[27]

Today we know that the area north of present-day Avola near the Stillwater Flats of the surveyors is hostile to agricultural efforts. Since it belongs to the Interior Wet Belt, there is too much precipitation, both in summer and winter, and the low river banks are subject to frequent flooding. The elevation is much higher than at the agriculturally far more desirable Louis Creek further south in the valley where "the elevation of the river in this locality being less than 100 feet above Kamloops, the climate is comparatively mild, and good crops of grain, hay and vegetables are annually grown without irrigation."[28] Since the surveyors' season ended with the advent of winter and the first heavy snowfalls, they might have been oblivious to the short winter days in the narrow valleys north of Vavenby. Here the "enormous rocky peaks and glaciers that are quite as fine as anything at Rogers Pass or Field" block

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[27] Ibid. The only reference to gardening in Johnson's report is sarcastic: Mr Fry's "garden was a gold-mine this year, for he charged us 10 cents a pound for vegetables."(Johnson, "Report on Surveys," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, D294.)

[28] E.P. Heywood, "Report on Surveys on Louis Creek and North Thompson River Valleys, 1912," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, 1913, British Columbia, Sessional Papers, (Victoria: King's Printer, 1914), D298.

the sun during much of the brief day.[29] Low-level cloud during most of the winter made for a depressing, isolating life which would only have been exacerbated by the small windows and thick walls of the typical log cabin.

The local inhabitants had little interest in furnishing this discouraging intelligence to the surveyors: they wanted to attract settlement with the accompanying improvements in infrastructure since that would raise the value of their land holdings or they could sell out at profit.[30] Probably noticing surveyor Johnson's distress at the continuous rainfall during July and August 1912, the settlers reported that "it was the wettest summer ever known in that part of the world," although, as Johnson shrewdly observed "the oldest old-timer has only been in the valley twenty years."[31]

As observed above, surveyor Lee was most guilty of an overly optimistic appraisal of the agricultural potential of his assigned region. The object of Lee's enthusiasm was the southern portion of today's Wells Gray Provincial Park. Here he surveyed and subdivided about 1200 acres into quarter sections for pre-emption. In January 1914, the Lillooet and Cariboo Land Company's cruiser W.J. Kelly, who took a detailed inventory of the company's land holdings of 5,120 acres near Clearwater Lake, optimistically pointed to its agricultural potential. The similarity between Kelly's and Lee's reports is striking.

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[29] Johnson, "Report on Surveys," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, D295, see also D294.

[30] The modern preoccupation with "neighbourhood" in the real estate trade may be a remnant of this concern.

Kelly described the ideal conditions for mixed farming, praising the gardening and farming potential of his assigned sections:

> The growth indeed is very similar to that around Vancouver... . All the hardy fruits grown in the Province will do well here, such as apples, plums, pears, currants, raspberries, strawberries etc., and field crops such as oats, barley, timothy, rye, clover, alfalfa, potatoes, beets, carrots, turnips, cabbage, cauliflower, parsnips, onions etc. Wheat can also be grown here.[32]

However, only two individuals actually homesteaded there.[33] One, John Ray, had pre-dated Lee's arrival by about ten years. Though he farmed on a modest scale his main income came from trapping. His only neighbour a few miles to the south, Mike Majerus, was even more dependent on trapping.[34] Surveyor W.W. Stevens who undertook a timber cruise of the Clearwater Valley in 1921 still thought approximately 20,000 acres of the valley suitable for agriculture,[35] but his colleague, W.S. Drewry, who followed two years later, observed rather laconically that "there are only a few hundred acres of agricultural land in Clearwater valley and this is in scattered parcels, so that no important agricultural development may be anticipated."[36]

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[31] Ibid., D295.

[32] W.J. Kelly, "Report on the Clearwater Lakes Tract of the Company's Holdings," (BCARS, Add. Mss. 384), 1.

[33] Lee, "Clearwater Valley" in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, D446.

[34] Ida De Kelver, "The John Ray Story," (Clearwater: Clearwater District Chamber of Commerce), passim, and Henry Hogue, "A Wilderness Story of Fear and Courage," passim.

[35] W.W. Stevens, Cruise of Clearwater River, 1921 (Kamloops: Ministry of Forests), 3. This is where Mike Majerus made his home.

[36] W.S. Drewry, "Clearwater Valley, Kamloops District," in Annual

Optimistic descriptions were not confined to government-internal correspondence or company reports but were translated into a flood of brochures advertising the area's potential in Europe. Alfred Graffunder remembers how his parents were drawn to the North Thompson valley from Germany and Austria in the real estate boom just prior to World War One:

> We left a very beautiful home in the Alps to come here. But we had pamphlets and maps and so much literature on Canada, so we had quite a bit of information before we decided to come... . There was a lot of advertising about the "promised land" all over Europe at that time, and I guess it looked inviting. They even had Eaton catalogues there.[37]

However, reality in the North Thompson was less prosaic. Graffunder remembered that his parents "came right to Chinook Cove [near Barriere] after they landed in Canada, and there they filed on a rock pile for a homestead."[38] The Graffunders may have read surveyor G.P. Heywood's "Report on Louis Creek and North Thompson River Valleys", where Heywood claimed that

> Chinook Cove, in the North Thompson River Valley, lies from forty to fifty miles north of Kamloops, and is easily accessible by wagon-roads on both sides of the river, a government ferry being in service forty-four miles up. The valley here is wide and contains extensive flats bordering on the river, which are especially adapted to farming and stock-raising purposes. There is also good agricultural land on the benches above the river on the west side, and good grazing land is plentiful on the hillsides.[39]

Report of the Minister of Lands, 1923, British Columbia, Sessional Papers, (Victoria: King's Printer, 1924), K106.

[37] Moss, Home Trail, vol. III, 27.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Heywood, "Report on Surveys," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, D289.

In fact, a realistic appraisal in this case lies somewhere between surveyor Heywood's farming paradise and Graffunder's "rock pile". The land in the flats is fertile but also subject to flooding during spring run-off and erosion of the soft banks by the river. The best, most promising sections had been claimed even before the surveyors arrived.

The pre-emptor series maps of 1915 and 1917 are examples of this: most of the surveyed parcels of the North Thompson pre-emptor's map were already claimed. The title "pre-emptor's map" would indicate a possible process, that this was a visual guide to surveyed lands which might be alienated for pre-emption: after all, "the Pre-emptor's Map Series was designed to meet the needs of land-seekers."[40] However, this map was a statement of fait accompli: practically all the lands were taken up and the first and most important phase of initial settlement was completed. The 1917 map showed practically no change.

It is curious that the surveyors should so uniformly have overstated the agricultural potential of their assigned areas. Early surveyors like Johnson, Christie and Lee concentrated on surveying and properly subdividing existing pre-emption claims along with demarcating new ones. Their observations were intended to sustain an ambitious settlement policy. Less than a decade later the British Columbia Government seems to have realised the marginal agricultural potential of the Upper Clearwater Valley and North Thompson Valley north of Avola. Interest shifted to assessing their industrial potential as is apparent from the new focus in the surveyors' reports.

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[40] Thomson, Men and Meridians, 130.

Surveyor's Industrial Vision

Stevens' report of his 1921 timber cruise of the Upper Clearwater dwelled extensively on the area's suitability for the logging industry. He probed many creeks as to their potential for log driving and reported on the availability of water-power sites. Helmcken Falls, today's most visited scenic attraction of Wells Gray Provincial Park, was to Stevens

> a magnificent water-power site ... [where] a minimum horse power of 20,000 can be developed ... With storage there is no reason why this 'white coal' could not be utilized to run mills, manufacturing plants and electric cars. By carrying a powerline for 30 miles, a minimum of 16,000 H.P. would be more than ample to run a 200 ton mill, producing ground-wood or mechanical pulp.[41]

Surveyor Drewry made similar recommendations:

> The juxtaposition of large quantities of both saw and pulp timber with great power possibilities would seem to indicate that the whole area should be carefully examined with development of these resources in view.[42]

The casual suggestion of large-scale intervention in the waterflow of the entire watershed seems at once naive and antiquated in its lack of environmental concern.[43] Many saw Helmcken Falls in terms of potential electricity; the suggestions for tinkering with the watershed were not discarded because of a suddenly increased environmental sensitivity but because establishing mills in the interior was financially precarious. Contemporary technology necessitated extensive arrangements to "drive"

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[41] Stevens, Cruise of Clearwater River, 3. Other proposals included large-scale diversions and dams to re-arrange the whole water flow of the area so that logs might be "flumed" to industry-friendly sites such as Blue River. (See Ibid., 6-7, 12.)

[42] Drewry, "Clearwater Valley," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, K107.

[43] Most of the area was later designated a Nature Conservancy.

the logs, often by means of artificially constructed chutes, to the processing facility. Otherwise, the logs would be transported via light rail, as frequently done on the coast at this time.[44] Drewry believed

> such industrial development would require large capital, because the building of about 40 miles of light railway to Murtle River, and its extension for logging purposes as required, would be necessary, as well as, the construction of power plants, saw and pulp mills, etc.[45]

Capital on the desired scale was not available to develop the timber resources of a far-away hinterland; it was reserved for the coastal forestry. The Douglas Fir, Western Red Cedar and Spruce forests of the interior could not compete with the coastal forestry in the size of trees and proximity to end users.

The advent of reliable internal combustion engines driving powerful logging trucks obviated the need for a light railway. Instead, roads would fulfil these transportation needs with skidder-tractors replacing horses and flumes. Instead of one wealthy capitalist building a railway, the government and logging companies collaborated in building an extensive logging road infrastructure. The necessary capital for the "rolling stock" — the logging trucks — was decentralised and divided among individual owner-operators who were paid a rent for this share in the larger venture. Beginning in 1940, the Swanson Lumber Company of Alberta transformed much of the region from a "useless wilderness" into a maze of industrial timber production resembling Drewry's and Lee's

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[44] The foresters were probably prejudiced by the comparatively intensive character of coastal logging practices, since there were few examples of industrial logging in the interior at this time.

[45] Drewry, "Clearwater Valley," in Annual Report of the Minister of Lands, K107.

descriptions.

Wells Gray Park itself, which, like other parks is understood by some to be a bulwark against industrial development, was set aside in 1939 because much of the timber-resource which so animated Drewry and Lee had disappeared in smoke during the devastating 1926 fire. As a result, the area had become a refuge especially for moose which multiplied enormously into the 1960s. Setting aside Wells Gray Park as a hunting and fishing preserve was part of the same utilitarian approach to designate areas for forestry or mining or settlements. Ideally, various industries would labour side by side like a well-tuned machine.

The surveyors' efforts, whether focused on the area's agricultural or industrial potential, had a clear result: the settlers of the North Thompson did not settle or explore blank, "white", spaces on a featureless map. Much of the land, and every section to be newly settled had been surveyed and demarcated. Even though the land was not yet "settled", some reference points had been provided. In fact, the area had been criss-crossed by all kinds of surveys. The CPR Survey of the 1870s, the different District Lot surveys under, for example, Lee and Green, various forestry inventory surveys, the activities of the Canadian Geological Survey, all resulted in maps and informational material. These surveyors had adopted certain viewpoints, some, like Lee trying to influence the further course of "History" by appraising the area's agricultural viability too optimistically. However, the surveyors had not created places or homes. They were seeking to lay out the conditions in which the transformation from space to place could occur.

CHAPTER V

TEACHING THE COUNTRY TO SPEAK

> The process of settlement was not a laconic replacement of one culture by another, a mechanical imposition of superior technology, a simple, physical 'taming' of the land, but, on the contrary, a process of teaching the country to speak.
>
> Paul Carter, *Road to Botany Bay*

Often historians have not accorded "place" a high importance, but John Agnew and James S. Duncan point to a surging recognition of "the intellectual importance of geographical place in the practice of social science and history."[1] They observe that

> the fragmentation of the meaning of place has occurred in a particular historical-intellectual setting. The modernization theories that have dominated recent social science and history have focussed heavily on the *national scale* ... [which has led to] a neglect of *scales* other than the national in the analysis of social process.[2]

Agnew saw the nineteenth century as a key period in the devaluation of place: nationalism and empire building were place-transcending ideologies. Survey, cartography and toponymic practices were the tools of this ideology which emptied a region's singular character into the notion of uniform, ever-expandable empire. This supports Edney's findings about the mapping of India and his notion that surveyors were

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[1] John A. Agnew and James S. Duncan eds., "The Devaluation of Place in Social Science," The Power of Place, (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 1. They seem to place history outside the social sciences.

[2] Ibid., 2.

the point men of the British Empire.[3] Today, this ideology is no longer confined to a national scale but has expanded to the focus of globality. Phrases like "global village" are attempts to re-scale this focus and imbue it with a semblance of tangible meaning. This modern ideology finds its most potent expression in the distorted image of the fragile planet earth or "spaceship earth" as seen from "outer space" by the "satellite eye".[4] In contrast to this illusion of an extra-planetary perspective local history may be the product of a more *appropriate* focus.[5]

The Australian geographer, Paul Carter noted that since "the grid is geographically characterless, the assumption has been that *therefore* it is also historically neutral."[6] This does not follow, and "the grid, as the traditional matrix of new urban [and rural] beginnings, is the supremely historical figure: it belongs to the progress of the West as quintessentially as the discourse of history itself"[7] The exclusion of spatial dimension from history is a positivistic legacy and

> those documents which specifically deal with unique beginnings and unrepeatable differences — the journals, diaries and unfinished maps that evoke the spatiality of historical experience — are relegated to the realm of literature-biography, fiction and epic poems.[8]

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[3] Edney, "The Patronage of Science," 62.

[4] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, xx.

[5] Alan Drengson, as a representative of the Deep Ecology movement, has extensively discussed the notion of "appropriate design" in Alan Drengson, Shifting Paradigms From Technocrat to Planetary Person, (Victoria: Lightstar Press, 1983).

[6] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 205.

[7] Ibid., 210-211.

[8] Ibid., 211.

For instance, considering Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poems, the Romanian poet Mircea Eliade commented that

> what we have here is sacred mythic geography, the only kind effectually real, as opposed to profane geography, the latter being 'Objective' and, as it were, abstract and non-essential ... the theoretical construction of a space and a world that we do not live in, and therefore do not *know*.[9]

An example of a personal, subjective mapping are the river maps frequently drawn by sternwheeler captains to denote islands, submerged rocks, "wooding" stations, and other points along the river. Emphasis, here, is put not on "objective" scale but subjective significance. These maps are thus documents of intense personal interaction between the map-maker and the river.[10]

Since historians frequently study maps, they should clarify for themselves the aesthetic and valuational parameters inherent in cartography and the process of map making. As Carter has frequently pointed out, the settlement process is inseparable from the narrative which grid and toponyms provide, to name just two constants of conventional maps. Therefore, it is important to amend the strictly mechanical parameters of the map with the historical narrative. Of critical importance in how a culture comes to terms with its physical

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[9] As quoted in Fredric S. Colwell, Rivermen. A Romantic Iconography of the River and the Source, (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 92. If the verb "to know" is indeed related to the greek "γιγνωσκω" which denoted *both* "to know" and "to perceive" then Eliade's thoughts may well uncover forgotten connections.

[10] An example of such a chart for the Yukon river is Bruce T. Batchelor, Yukon Channel Charts, (Whitehorse: Rock & Roll Moose Meat Publishing, 1980). Similar experiences inform, for example, Antoine de Exupery's books about flying, like Vol de Nuit (1931), Courier du Sud (1929), Ecrits de jeunesse (1935), and Wind, Sand and Stars (1939).

environment is how it sinks linguistic roots into the initial conceptual tabula rasa of a landscape; toponyms are important documents of this cultural process.

Generally, the longer a cohesive culture dwells in a region the more complex its toponymic vocabulary is likely to become. In this way, the English geographer Margaret Gelling has found a surprisingly large and subtle Anglo Saxon topographical vocabulary which betrays a remarkable sensitivity to change in the landscape. This vocabulary contains many words usually treated as synonyms. Gelling cautions that these terms were "rarely, perhaps never, synonyms to the Anglo Saxons. Just as the Arab has many words for 'camel' and the Eskimo have many words for 'snow', the Anglo Saxon peasant farmer had many words for 'hill' and 'valley'."[11]

In contrast, the settlers on the North Thompson had not resided in the area long enough to create such subtle a toponymic vocabulary as the Simpcw who had preceded them. This supports Paul Carter's conclusion that settlement in Australia involved "teaching the country to speak" and that the relative failure by Europeans to adopt locally evolved aboriginal concepts of the land into their own language "is one reason why English here continues to float, as it were, off the ground and why, despite its ability to name isolated objects, its poetic power to evoke the living space remains patchy."[12]

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[11] Margaret Gelling, Place-Names in the Landscape, (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1984), 7.

[12] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 136-137. The geographer Louis-Edmond Hamelin has suggested that *Terres steriles* is one of the more

In order to analyse the toponymic vocabulary, white presence may be divided into four waves: first, the fur traders, followed by miners, white trappers, then surveyors, and ending with the arrival of real estate speculators and whole families. The first three groups consisted mostly of migratory bachelors. The last wave brought entire families who were, generally, in search of a new homestead.

Each group left its own toponymic residue on the landscape. The fur traders named several of the natural features in memory of their own such as the Thompson river after David Thompson, after helpful Natives, such as Tete Jaune Cache after a legendary blonde Iroquois packer, or after animals such as Goose Creek. Other features were named for what the fur traders considered obvious features such as Clearwater River for the contrast its clear water provides when compared to the silt-green waters of the North Thompson. Barriere was named after the dangerous rocky shallows in the river.

The CPR surveyors — just like their later colleagues — named places chiefly after their own people and their history. For example, the CPR surveyor Joseph Hunter named Murtle Lake after his own birthplace.[13] Crown land surveyors expressed similar values in their toponymic preferences although they began to operate about forty years later. For example, while engaged in the government land survey in the

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striking examples of unpoetic Canadian toponyms. It says little or nothing about places and the land but much about the inventors of the terminology and their aesthetic of place. (Louis-Edmond Hamelin, "Barren Grounds - Terres Steriles: Geographie et Terminologie," in For the Purposes of Dominion, eds. Kenneth Coates and William R. Morrison, (Toronto: Captus University Press, 1989).)

[13] See also Theodore G. Martin to Joseph Hunter, 17 February

Upper Clearwater valley, surveyor R.H. Lee chanced across a spectacular waterfall and wanted to name it after the popular premier of the time, Sir Richard McBride. The following exchange of letters is revealing of the complex nature of contemporary toponymic practices: Lee saw

> a number of large and beautiful falls varying from 20 to 75 feet in height but there is one especially worthy of note with a perpendicular fall of some 400 to 500 feet. I have never seen any waterfalls in British Columbia to equal these falls for grandeur and magnificence.
>
> As I am the first surveyor to make surveys in this locality I would like to have the pleasure of giving the name I would prefer to give to this river and the falls, so I therefore ask may I name the river the 'McBride River' and the falls the 'McBride Falls' in honour of the distinguished Premier of British Columbia?[14]

That Lee so carefully pointed out that he was the first surveyor on the block was not accidental but a deliberate reminder of an otherwise tacit convention: first he reminded his reader that he had the authority to name the feature and then, almost rhetorically and to preserve etiquette, he asked leave to do so. Lee, who probably thought the name's acceptance was a foregone conclusion must have been surprised about Sir Richard's terse answer barely two weeks later:

> I would suggest that you call the falls you mention after the Honourable J. S. Helmcken, whose name I believe has not been connected with anything on the mainland and who desires to have his name preserved in the geography of B.C., for which he has done so much.[15]

Although Sir Richard so readily volunteered Helmcken's name he still had to persuade the aging doctor who had helped negotiate the Terms of Union. In January 1915, eighteen months after instructing Lee,

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1926, (BCARS, Add.Mss. 767, vol. 25).

[14] Lee to McBride, 24 July 1913, (BCARS, GR441, vol. 653/13).

[15] McBride to Lee, 11 August 1913, (BCARS, GR441, vol. 653/13).

he corresponded with Helmcken who wrote three letters declining the honour. On January 17, 1915, Helmcken felt he would be

> doing an injustice to many who have been much more influential in shaping the history of British Columbia [and that] possibly it would be better to adopt the Indian name and the tradition connected with it. There could be no complaint about this.[16]

Clearly, Helmcken alluded to a general perception about the neutral nature of Native toponymy.

However, two days later, Sir Richard replied, perhaps impatiently:

> I note what you say in regard to your name being perpetuated by other physical objects of the Province, but you are always too modest about your place in British Columbia history. The water-fall was named after you some time ago and *you have been permanently placed on the map in connection*. The fact of one or two unimportant things having been named after you does not really matter.[17]

Not only was the named waterfall a physical monument to Helmcken in the landscape; with this toponymic gesture, McBride authorised Helmcken's direct entry into the narrative of the map.

There is a further possibility that McBride refused to have his own name connected with the falls because he felt he might be more prominently remembered. Since individuals could have too many features named after them, it was prudent to wait until the most desirable feature became available to be named. Helmcken Falls which Premier McBride had optimistically described to be located "on the route of the CNR" was at least one day's arduous journey away from the

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[16] Helmcken to McBride, 17 January 1915, (BCARS, GR441, vol. 51/15).

[17] McBride to Helmcken, 19 January 1915, (BCARS, GR441, vol. 51/15). (my italics)

nearest CNR station and may have seemed too remote a place for the distinguished premier.

Another toponymically prolific group were the white trappers who came in the 1890s. Some of their choices seem arbitrary if not frivolous: Lickskillet Creek and Lone Spoon Creek are typical examples. These represent personal experiences and were efforts to make the landscape more familiar. On the other hand, many of their names reflected their bounty: modern File Creek (which empties into Murtle Lake) used to be called Wolf Creek.[18] Trappers happily applied their own names to the land. As a fellow trapper rather jealously noted, John Ray, who came to the Upper Clearwater valley in 1909[19] was not shy when it came to naming the landscape around his domicile: Wells Gray Park still has a Ray lake and Ray Mountain.[20] Anderson Lake and Angushorne Creek also commemorate trappers active in the area. Trappers, it seems, personalised the landscape rhetorically just as they cut their own distinctive blazes into the trees along their traplines.

The last group, the settler families came to inhabit the country permanently, to make it their new home. Their fence lines, log homes, barns and clearings were physical spatial gestures akin to the trappers' blazes. They used locally available material such as Western Red Cedar to build structures whose surprisingly conservative design had been developed elsewhere. The peculiar characteristics of the cedar permit

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[18] See Charlie Shook, "The Tail of the Bob-Tailed Marten," (Upper Clearwater: unpublished manuscript, 1950), 5.

[19] De Kelver, "The Ray Farm Story," 3.

[20] See Hogue, "A Wilderness Story," 35.

easy splitting to yield a smooth, straight board. The settlers, therefore, did not have to purchase expensive mill-sawn lumber but could use the resources at hand.

More importantly, the settlers evoked their new home through toponyms. Spatial history's insights into the naming of places illuminates this settlement process:

> Names preceded places. The spatial effect was to render what lay 'yonder' central, to transform a former boundary into a communicable space; 'there' became 'here' and an exchange of opinions could occur."[21]

In this sense, settler toponymy is less indicative of what it says about the land than what it says about the settlers, their culture, imaginations and aesthetic intentions.

The new settler culture proceeded to invent and order the rhetorical landscape according to its own aesthetic. "Butcher's Island", one of several names for the later Birch Island, commemorated the slaughter of approximately 200 head of cattle by the C.N.R to feed its building crew. Settlers felt the name had to give way;[22] although the island was authentically commemorated, the toponym was perceived to be too grisly in the totality and one-dimensionality of its expression. A new name had to be found. Frank Holt, the son of an early settler remembered that

> Birch island had several names at different times originally, two of these being Wynne's Flat and Umbrella Flat. In 1915 my mother, Sara Holt, was asked by railway officials to name the station. She wanted them to see Mr. Bob Alexander about it, since he had been there longer. The railroad officials said that since she was the only woman living on the

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[21] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 137.

[22] Moss, Home Trail, vol. III, 57.

> flat, they would give her the honor. She really didn't know what to call it. It was suggested that she pick her hometown in England, but she didn't feel that would be right, as Mr. Alexander was the oldest inhabitant. So she named it Birch Island. They wanted to know where the island was, and she said, 'Wait until we go up to the railway bridge, and you'll see.' The bridge and trestle was one mile long at the time. When they went over it, they could see the island, with birch trees on it, in the river, and they were satisfied. They told mother she had made a good choice.[23]

Settlers created an instant chronology by silently adhering to such conventions as observing the aristocracy of first arrival, as is obvious in the deliberations surrounding the naming of Birch Island.[24] A complex structure evolved ranking the appropriateness of linguistic patrons. In the case of Birch Island, the first woman settler was given more authority than the bachelors who had arrived earlier. It is clear that women enjoyed special status in the new settler communities. Mr. Mann, a bachelor-settler near present-day Blackpool lamented in 1905 that

> a place never amounts to anything without women and children. We are all bachelors on Mosquito Flats already, but we do not want any more of them without they give [sic] bonds that they are to be married before settling on the land. We want schools and churches and it takes women to bring them along.[25]

Toponyms not only allowed settlers to bring a place into being; the names communicated intentions to audiences such as travellers or potential fellow-settlers. There is clear evidence that settlers were keenly aware of audiences for their names. When naming Blackpool,

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[23] Ibid., 38. The anecdote telling of the island's naming is edited in that it excludes this prior name. Further, the semantic gap between the two toponyms may hide their obvious phonetic similarities.

[24] Surveyor Lee alluded to the same convention when he wrote to McBride.

[25] Inland Sentinel, 19 September 1905.

settlers clearly had in mind an image which they wished to portray. Before highway travel people often journeyed by rail. When pulling into a station, however small, the traveller simply had to look out the window to see the sign announcing the place-name. Settlers were evidently troubled when the sign did not portray a desirable image of the community adjacent to it, however fitting the toponym may have been. The little hamlet of "Blackpool" serves as a typical instance: Roger Tibbetts, a local farmer wrote that

> East Blackpool, shortly before we came was aptly named 'Mosquito Flats', but the local residents had objected to that name. The Railway officials said they could name it anything they liked. Jack Miller, who had a farm near the [Queen Bess] mine, named it from his old town in England, and he named the post office Algirth [sic] after his folk's hometown. So when we arrived, it was Blackpool Station and Algirth [sic] Post Office.[26]

Evidently, settlers frowned on the idea of curious travellers craning their necks to see the "station identification" only to recoil at the unpleasant connotations of "Mosquito Flats". Above all, the young settlements needed to be inviting so that they would quickly reach the economically critical stage to support certain governmental and economic infrastructure: post-offices, schools, banks, and stores of all kinds. The more people lived in the community the more likely would these services arrive and be sustained. Their new choice was ironic: The aptly, if deftly named "Mosquito Flats", probably so referred to in the more frank and honest local settler conversations, — honest because even today the healthiest and most numerous residents of the moist, fertile oxbow-lake meadows are hungry, potent mosquitoes — gave way to the exact

opposite. Blackpool, a large sea-side resort community on the Irish Sea in Lancashire, derives its income from weary tourists seeking enjoyment and leisure. Hence, the name served up a delicious contrast between intended association, especially in the ears and eyes of the visitor, and the reality of everyday existence in "Mosquito Flats".

The naming of Blackpool also demonstrated the para-governmental power of the railway. CNR officials did not have jurisdiction to give names to settlements, but could name their small stations "anything they liked".[27] Sometimes they extended this privilege to the settlers, although at times the railway commemorated their own or served up insipid, bland creations like Valemount, which harnessed together "vale" and "mountain".[28] Similarly, little imagination is evident in appellations like Vinsulla[29] or Avola.[30] Since "the CNR apparently found itself hard-pressed for names"[31] it may indicate that the CNR was desperate rather than generous when it came to naming places.

These deliberations point towards the inadequacy of what is referred to as a taxonomic approach to place-name explanation which

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[26] Moss, Home Trail, vol. III, 82. Algirth stands for Auldgirth.

[27] Ibid.

[28] See Mary Balf, Why That Name? Place-names in the Kamloops District, (Kamloops: Kamloops Museum, 1978), 46. Or Akrigg and Akrigg, B.C. Place-names, 316.

[29] From Sullivan, a pioneer in the area. Akrigg and Akrigg, B.C. Place-names, 326 or Balf, Why That Name?, 47. He already had a lake named after him.

[30] Akrigg and Akrigg, B.C. Place-Names, 13; Balf, Why That Name?, 3. Balf claims the name was given by the CNR, the Akriggs ascribe the choice to the Post Office.

exhausts itself in providing an etymological or short biographical gloss on the toponym. This detracts from the circumstances of the place-name's invention. They spirit away that *historical* moment with its *historical* associations between namer and object which is so instrumental in supplying us with a spatial history, and the contemporary state of mind of a culture. The quest for that kind of a spatial history is made possible through the transformation of a taxonomy of toponyms with fixed meanings and associations into a dynamic, open-ended, rhetorical landscape where an immediacy and freshness connected the namer, their imagination, and the names.

In this way, the taxonomic approach cannot get close to the important insights which toponyms might provide. The linguistic genesis of the hamlet of Vavenby serves as an example, since the taxonomic explanation lingers on an unusual circumstance: when the first post office was established at Vavenby, "Mr. Pridgeon suggested the name of Navenby (after his hometown in England). However, the **N** was mistaken for a **V**, and the unique name of Vavenby became accepted."[32] But this anecdote missed the significance of Pridgeon's naming the hamlet after his hometown in Lincolnshire.

Consider an incident illustrative of this spatial, rhetorical explanation of settlement which offers an Australian parallel to the rhetorical genesis of Vavenby:

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[31] Balf, Why That Name?, 47.

[32] Moss, Home Trail, vol. II, 68. See also Balf, Why that Name?, 46 and Akrigg and Akrigg, B.C. Place-names, 322. The Akriggs sounded a note of disappointment when they commented that "Unfortunately, the postal

> According to family tradition, when the first of the Austins took up his selection near Gulong, this exchange occurred between him and his wife:
> 'I am going to make a township of that paddock running down to the river. What name shall I give it?' Mrs Austin at once said, 'Call it Chilwell, after my old home'.[33]

The taxonomic approach to this toponym was an etymological gloss on the meaning of Chilwell, a comment on the Derbyshire village's cool springs. However, this

> wholly misses the anecdote's spatial significance. The Austin's were bringing into being a place by announcing their intention to do so: from that time on, whether it mushroomed foundations and roofs or remained a paddock, Chilwell was a point of reference, it had become an intentional object; a place had been linguistically settled... . By naming that paddock, the Austins settled their own history, mapping out a family future.[34]

The noteworthy circumstance is less the misinterpretation of the letter by the authorities than the apparent acceptance of the new creation by the settlers. "Vavenby" is just as euphonious as "Navenby" and its acceptance might indicate a certain feeling of autonomy from their British birthplace felt by the settlers. Surely, had they disapproved a quick communication to "the authorities" could have quickly settled the matter to everyone's satisfaction.

Erasure of Native Vestiges

Hand in hand with the rhetorical colonisation of the land by white immigrants went the systematic silencing of Native rhetorical vestiges. Native place-names rarely appeared on maps, the White instrument for

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authorities misread his handwriting and so it became 'Vavenby'".

[33] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 137.

[34] Ibid. See also page 144.

taking inventory. There were some exceptions and possible explanations will be discussed below.

The land was, in effect, forced to change languages. Not permitting Native toponyms in the new, "authoritative" geographical inventory silenced the Native presence here; in fact, it was never allowed to appear in the first place. The new place-names were euphonic, eugenically. The place had been genetically "harmonised" by denying a Native presence. Those places which retained Native place-names were the reserves, like Chu Chua or names taken out of context, like Spahats Creek (or Bear Creek). The map presented a *fait accompli* showing Native and white settlements side by side, on an equal footing as if this had always been the case; in doing so, it denied most of the pre-existing Native history and presence.

This linguistic, toponymic silencing of the land went hand in hand with the silencing of the entire Native culture as it occurred in the Native residential schools. A former student of the Kamloops residential school remembered that

> At the Indian residential school, we were not allowed to speak our language; we weren't allowed to dance, sing because they told us it was evil. It was evil for us to practice any of our cultural ways.[35]

The historian Celia Haig-Brown explained that

> although there was some change over time, Indian culture was never accepted by the school as a real, living culture. Rather it was seen as something archaic and undesirable, something to be annihilated.[36]

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[35] Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal, 53. Similar observations can be found else where in the book.

[36] Ibid., 53. Natives from the Central North Thompson also attended

While whites tended to dismiss Native culture as a contemporary phenomenon they were often interested in its historical aspects. Ethnologists carefully recorded various aspects of Native culture as if compiling an inventory. Clothed in this familiar matrix of analysis, Native culture became acceptable as historical and as a suitable preface to white history. In that sense J.S. Helmcken had pointed to the Native name and tradition as an appropriate toponym for the waterfall. He felt that "there could be no complaint about this" because through the scientific, ethnographic inventory-process Native culture had been cleansed of its peculiar idiosynchrasies and appropriated into the prevalent white discourse as a static phenomenon, much like the dead and therefore static languages and their cultures like Latin and Greek were felt to be logical antecedents to Western civilisation. All the bold rhetoric of new beginnings to the contrary, it seems that white culture wanted to see itself in context. The myth of progress with its need for a static beginning and stress on uni-directional development may well be a vestige of this desire.

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the Kamloops Indian Residential School, because this area "fell within the governmental jurisdiction called the Kamloops Agency."(Ibid., 32.)

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, place has been conceived as an object to be controlled. For this reason, it was measured and quantified so that any of its unique characteristics might be emptied into the grand vessel of universality: the ubiquitous grid serves as an example. Therefore, inasmuch as place has become the object to be controlled and manipulated under the instrumentalist gaze, it has disappeared as a locus of personal approach to place.

These approaches can operate on many levels. The geographer J. Douglas Porteous has argued for a liberation of smell-scape and hear-scape from the tyranny of exclusively visual portraits of place. In this way, the auditory dimension of sternwheeler and train whistles are as much part of place as the realities of smell-scape. Early settler Millie Marleston's experience gave a local example:

> I can recall [John Alexander, Timberline John] when he used to come down off his mountain, selling vegetables. There was one problem, — I could not stand the smell of him, the goats and garlic, in the kitchen. After he'd been in, you couldn't get rid of the goat smell for hours. It got so that when we'd see him coming, we would meet him at the door, or Doug [her husband] would go out and talk with him, and tell him what vegetables we wanted. He was a well-educated

> man — well spoken. It was a pleasure to visit with him, but it was hard to breathe near him in confined quarters.[1]

Clearly, smell has spatial significance. An approach to local history might explore these documents of the senses and encourage a synaesthetic appreciation of place. The historian Alain Corbin has concluded that "it is from the sense of smell, rather than the other senses, that we gain the fullest picture of the great dream of disinfection and of the new intolerances" of which Timberline John's goat and garlic smell was just one indication.[2]

Several other conceptual problems attend the analysis of place-construction. The geographer Kent C. Ryden, for example, did not "believe that there is no such a thing as a completely placeless piece of ground, no matter how rationally it has been constructed."[3] Therefore, he evoked "the narratives implicit in the landscape."[4]

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[1] L. Moss, The Home Trail, vol. II, 49-50.

[2] Alain Corbin, The Foul and the Fragrant. Odor and the French Social Imagination, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 232.

[3] Kent C. Ryden, Mapping the Invisible Landscape: Folklore, Writing, and the Sense of Place, (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993), 292.

[4] Ibid., 264. Ryden oscillates between a priori and a-posteriori conceptions of "place". The tension inherent in this dualistic conception seems unresolved and the struggle to harmonise them informs his enterprise.

As demonstrated in this study, various groups of people felt competent in the aesthetic judgement they exercised in their toponymic choice. Analysis of this judgement must proceed carefully, since it is itself based on aesthetic criteria. To side-step these difficulties and at the same time to ground the analysis, it is not uncommon to find "place" postulated as pre-existing human arrival. We hear of "mythic" places, of places having a certain aura which suggests itself — as if from without — to the visitor. Particularly since the 1960s, mention of these a priori places has become common, places which are said to have a "power of their own". Probably, this was a way to evoke a spiritualist tradition reminiscent of Native conceptions of place which, because they were considered "deeper", more mythic, were likewise deemed to be more authentic. This approach reveals a linearity of its own and confuses the acknowledgement of a toponymic tradition, which had been constructed and massaged by centuries of interaction between land and society — as was the case with Simpcw culture — with the postulation of an a priori place as suggested by Ryden.

He argued with Carter that "place is a human construction which requires human occupancy of and activity in the landscape" but dangerously qualified it by asserting that "there is no such thing as a completely placeless piece of ground."[5] Consequently, without human

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[5] Ibid., 225, 292.

construction or without human presence, there would be no place. However, this kind of analysis might overlook that the white spaces on the map, rather than being place-less, conveniently erased the existing Native presence. Similarly, Carter has pointed out that white settlement had to first erase the Native presence, to sterilise the map, before it could construct places of its own. The same held true of the practise of "christening" Natives with Christian names and the contemporary approach to Native language and culture: Adams Lake and River was named after Chief Sel howt kan who was named Adam by the fur-traders.[6] Similarly, the Oblate Brothers forbade their Native students to speak their language so that they would forget it. In its place they would be taught English. Acquisition of white culture was to take place in a similar manner.

Accuracy is important when levelling blame and easy charges of insensitivity at the white settlers. Ryden, for example, commented that

> the history of European expansion on the North American continent was accomplished at the continual expense of Native Americans whose mythic interpretation of landscape was pushed aside and imaginatively paved over by whites who assumed that they were moving into blank geographical space and believed that, since they themselves could place no narratives on the territory they were settling, no such narratives existed. After all, we think, if territory looks blank on the map, it must be blank in the mind as well.[7]

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[6] Balf, Why that Name?, 1.

[7] Ryden, Mapping the Invisible Landscape, 292.

Ryden made several sweeping generalisations here. The claim that whites "could place no narratives on the territory they were settling" becomes contestable when we look at toponyms as narratives, which Carter has clearly suggested. Even the grid is a narrative if we expand the definition of either term. The narrative is inherent in the settler's intentional gaze of Carter's definition. To tease out some of this narrative's dimension is the object of probing toponyms and the survey. However, the chief problem lies with Ryden's initial assumption: how do we know that whites "assumed that they were moving into blank geographical space"[8]?

There is evidence of whites trying to ascertain Native conceptions of place by researching Native toponyms. This archival effort — as can be seen, for instance, in Dawson and Teit, — hardly betrays a belief in "blank geographical space" but a genuine attempt to come to terms with the previous toponymic narratives placed on the land. This archival effort in itself may be reflective of what kind of thinking directed their intentional gaze.[9] The question of the *success* of both research and adoption of these narratives is an entirely different matter.

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[8] Ibid.

[9] George M. Dawson, Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada For the Year 1891, vol. IX, (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1892), in particular, 40-44. List of 220 Place-names in the Shuswap country, British Columbia.

As an alternative explanation, we may ascribe to the white archivists of toponyms a desire to take inventory of the land and its "resources", amongst these cultural as well as physical. Still, they did not assume that the country's geography was blank. Whether dealing with cultural arrogance, simple misunderstanding or a combination of both we cannot infer that because whites adopted few Native toponymic narratives, they therefore must have assumed a "blank geographical space".[10] Ryden's rather global assertions must, therefore, be treated with caution.

The settlers approached the physical landscape in the same way as they placed narratives on the land. Rather than being mindlessly destructive, as is suggested by Ryden, the settlers re-ordered the landscape to yield a scene familiar to them. This intentionality is revealed in a variety of spatial gestures: although trees were hacked down and, on occasion, land burned over, a sense of the picturesque was seldom lost. For instance, Jack Moilliett, an early settler remembered that the earliest settler, had planted an alley of trees leading to his house:

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[10] The moral overtones of Ryden's remarks are problematic. He thought that there was so much cultural difference between Natives and whites that even the project of writing a Native history from a white point of view becomes debatable. If these cultural differences may be judged so incisive as to call into question any cultural translation between the two, then it may be said that whites moved into "blank geographical space" since the pre-existing toponymic narrative was, to the white

> Allingham had a beautiful lane. I remember the road crew was forbidden to touch a tree or limb in Allingham's lane. It was the beauty spot of the country then.[11]

Planting the trees was a typical spatial gesture evoking familiar picturesque images remembered from "the old country". Clearly, they were not lost on the surrounding young community. Rather than destroying the place so recently disclosed in a vision and often named after a home in Europe, the settlers wanted to transform it to make it yield the product of their intentions, much like a sculptor looks at a rock.

The re-naming of Birch Island revealed spatial sensitivity and intentions as did the change from Mosquito Flats to Blackpool. To dismiss these spatial gestures is to misunderstand the settlement process. As Carter has pointed out,

> contrary to the imperial paradigm of colonization, in which settlement follows on smoothly from discovery and exploration, the settlers inhabited the new country strategically. They were themselves discoverers and explorers. Rather than think of the process as a one-way road coming to a full stop outside a cottage door wreathed with roses, we should think of settlement much more as a stop along the road.[12]

Building styles, as spatial gestures, were also physical residues of this conceptual stop along the way and offer insight into the settler aesthetic. However, authors have frequently commented on the aesthetic

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immigrants incomprehensible babble and could be dismissed as such.

[11] Moss, Home Trail, vol. II, 61.

[12] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 138.

appropriateness of buildings which is predicated on the postulation of an a-priori landscape. For instance, the historian Paul Voisey lamented that in Vulcan specifically, and on the Alberta prairies in general, "the settlers showed no inclination to select architectural styles in harmony with their new environment."[13] An example of the perceived disharmony between design and environment, he explained, is shown in

> the two-story barns, originally built against hillsides in Europe and eastern America, so that wagons could deliver hay directly into the loft for storage, and two-story farmhouses with sweeping verandas, originally designed for protection against rain rather than wind, accompanied settlers to the midwest and later to the flat, arid plains.[14]

Apart from the economic consideration that building two stories is cheaper in that it saves expenses in roof and basement construction, Voisey seemed unhappy that the buildings of the Vulcan settler somehow clashed with a pre-existing a priori aesthetic of the place, an aesthetic which preceded the settlers' intentional gaze of Carter's definition.

In this way, architecture historian John L. Rempel urged that, buildings should thus be studied in the context of their environment to be properly understood and appreciated, but he saw "environment" as more than physical space. When he analysed the building styles of nineteenth century Canadian wood houses he reflected that

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[13] Voisey, Vulcan, 96.

[14] Ibid.

> the forms and expressions of architecture are derived from the contemporary social, economic, and political life of a people and from the climate and natural resources of a place. From these interacting factors there grows a style of building, so native to a time and place that it seems the 'natural' response to that environment. An 'unnatural' solution to the problems of building is one unrelated to the surrounding culture; it comes, in a few years, either ridiculous or a sham.[15]

Even with this caveat, it becomes rather difficult to stigmatise a building as "unnatural" other than on strictly aesthetic grounds.

The role of an a priori environment is called into question by the evidence of cross-regional building styles which were not an innovation of this century. When Rempel described the plank and post building methods of the French colonists, he seemed to minimise the role environment played in the design of the structures:

> [this] design was carried by traders across the whole of Canada and became the accepted method of building trading posts. Indeed, the method occurs in so many localities across the continent that it has come to bear different names: 'Manitoba Frame' or 'Red River Frame' in the mid-west, 'Hudson's Bay Frame' near the west coast, and in some cases west of the Rockies it is referred to simply as 'Canadian'.[16]

Clearly, this building style which required more skill than competing methods was based foremost on the builder's vision as well as on the available skill and training of the craftsmen rather than a "reader

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[15] John L. Rempel, Building With Wood and Other Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Building in Central Canada, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. xiii.

response" to the natural environment or the "spirit of place".[17] Many designs may be equally valid, certainly from an aesthetic point of view, if not from a functional one as well, in that they cannot be predicated on an a priori environment. Who is to say that the kickwilli of the Sempcw was less valid than the hybrid loghouse of the early settler?

This, in turn sheds light on the continuous mobility of settlers. Their culture developed the paradox of the mobile home. Perhaps the settlers never settled down at all, never came to a rest which, perhaps, is why North American culture places so much stress on mobility, cars and highways. Ironically, this may render the Native's "wandering state", the need to travel to continue to inhabit his country, to stay where he was, [18] as not irreconcilably different from the immigrants.

The idea of progress discloses itself when exposed as only one of many possible approaches: it no longer seems neutral in its ubiquity and universality. Reconsider Dawson's progress up the North Thompson river on the noisy sternwheeler and his encounter with the Native who sat motionless and facing away. Dawson was puzzled precisely because

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[16] Ibid., 15.

[17] A latter-day example of cross-continental building styles is the frame house, developed in the twentieth century out of previous framing styles. Once the design was found to be satisfactory — being strong, versatile, comparatively cheap and easy to build — governments collaborated by creating building codes and lumbermills produced the standardised dimensional lumber needed to perpetuate the design.

he could not conceive of any other reality as that perceived through the concept of progress. However, this belief was not shared by the Native. So different must have been the respective conceptual frameworks that the two seemed to inhabit discrete, separate universes. This tension seems glossed over by the march of progress which seeks to order the past to explain how we developed to the present.

In that sense, the chronological approach of this thesis was intended to point to the fragmentary nature of various episodes such as the rupture in native culture, the brief, discontinuous presence of the placer miners, trappers and surveyors rather than emphasising the continuity and seamless progress of History in the Central North Thompson. Each group evoked place differently as was shown in the analysis of their physical and verbal spatial gestures such as their toponyms, gridlines and blaze marks. If these manifestations are only analyses in an instrumental way, their only utility lying in how they might explain the present, they are deprived of their value as important indicators of a contemporary culture's state of mind.

But the idea of progress may in itself be a cul-de-sac. In that sense, Dawson's grand, noisy procession up the Thompson stood in no relationship to any utilitarian gain. Although Dawson justified his sightseeing trip with occasional forays on land to collect samples for

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[18] Carter, Road to Botany Bay, 336.

mineralogical assays so that he might determine the utility of the land to later arrivals, he accomplished very little through the expensive boat ride. However, Dawson's wide-ranging travels were an expression of his culture's desire to begin inhabiting the new land. This "wandering state" would, in the end, create an entirely new sense of place.

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Subdivision of the Shuswap Nation. Map after Teit, "The Shuswap."

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Title of Thesis:

TEACHING THE COUNTRY TO SPEAK: Settling and Establishing Place in the Central North Thompson

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October 17, 1996

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Appendix

Acculturation by Osmosis

The writing of native-white history is approached by many different perspectives. By my association with the Nisga'a people I have been affected in ways I don't fully understand.

For the past ten years I have been living and working with the Nisga'a people of the Nass Valley. Eight years ago I married Noreen Robinson of Lakalzap, daughter of Johnny Robinson (Eagle chief) and Marion Robinson (Killerwhale matriarch). At the time of our wedding, I was formally adopted into the Wolf tribe (house of Dukw) by the late Beatrice Bright and given the Nisga'a name "Howling Wolf."

As an accepted tribal member I was welcomed and expected to fulfill my obligations at all tribal meetings and settlement feasts. Although most of our public meetings are conducted in Nisga'a, Noreen, a Nisga'a language teacher of ten years experience, usually was available to interpret. In her absence members of my tribal family or other friends would assist me.

With this one exception, my tribal responsibility, I chose not to fast-track it in becoming "Nisga'aized." I neither fish nor hunt so the native cuisine we do enjoy results from Noreen's long hours in her mother's smokehouse. At the same time I have made no special attempt to study the Nisga'a ethnography. I felt it was vital for me to write a proper recorded history of the Nisga'a before turning to the oral traditions.

My knowledge of the Nisga'a language and culture has been picked up by osmosis. At no time have I chosen to be judgemental about the multiplicity of stories I have heard about the olden days. Instead I have opted to assimilate all this information and synthesize it as a filter against aberrations and inconsistencies in the literature. As the information came to me as a result of being an integral part of the community and the sources were from all four tribes the end product withstands the test of dynastic propaganda. This is the sounding board against which I tested all sources, the filter through which I wrote this history.

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Title of Thesis/Dissertation: "Persistence and Change: The Demographic and Cultural Reasons for Acceptance and Rejection of Economic Development on the Skeena and Nass Rivers of British Columbia, 1831-1916."

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